

# Drama 2013

## Teaching and learning resources

### Sample unit of work

This sample unit of work demonstrates a way to plan teaching, learning and assessment that integrates three dramatic forms and styles including the mandatory style, Realism.

Focus: The real and the unimagined
<b>Time allocation</b>
20 weeks; Semester 1, Year 11
<b>Dramatic forms and styles</b>
Realism (category 1) Verbatim Theatre (category 2) Process Drama (category 2)
<b>Purpose</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To chronicle and document</li><li>• To inform</li><li>• To challenge</li><li>• To celebrate</li><li>• To empower</li></ul>
<b>Contexts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal</li><li>• Historical</li><li>• The contextual focus could change each year, dependent on the interests of students and communities at the time</li></ul>
<b>Resources</b>
<p><b>Texts</b></p> <p><b>Realism.</b> Playscripts by these playwrights are written and/or performed in the style of Realism, though the form of the play may vary: Henrik Ibsen, Anton Chekov, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, David Williamson, Margery Forde, Michael Gow, Hannie Rayson, Joanna Murray-Smith</p> <p><b>Verbatim Theatre.</b> Excerpts from a selection of these playscripts written and/or performed in the style of Verbatim Theatre will be studied in the unit.</p> <p>Brown, P <i>Aftershocks</i> Burton, D <i>April's Fool</i> Forde, M <i>Snapshots from Home</i> Harrison, J <i>Stolen</i> McKenzie, S <i>Scattered Lives</i> O'Connell, T <i>Minefields and Miniskirts</i> Oswald, D <i>Skate</i> Purcell, L <i>Box the Pony</i> Rayson, H <i>Hotel Sorrento</i> Valentine, A <i>Run Rabbit Run</i></p>

## Focus: The real and the unimagined

### Reference materials

Brown, P *Verbatim: Staging Memory and Community*  
Clausen, M *Centre Stage*  
Hagen, U *Respect for Acting*  
Harwood, R *All the World's a Stage*  
Oyston, P *How to Use the Stanislavsky System*  
Stanislavski, K *An Actor Prepares*  
Strube, H, Beh, M, Davis, S, Jones, A, Ryan, S & Yaxley, R *Dramatexts: Creative Practice for Senior Drama Students*  
Touelle, L and McNamara, M A *Practical Approach to Drama Performance*

### Skills of drama

Forming: scriptwriting, including written conventions  
Presenting: acting, applying stagecraft, working as an ensemble  
Responding: critiquing

### Dramatic languages

Elements of drama	role, character, relationship, situation, tension, language, dramatic focus, time and place
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Conventions of forms and styles	Realism: fourth wall, believable character, motivated movement, realistic language and voice, magic-if, through line, beats and units of action, objective, super objective, emotion memory, circles of concentration, personal object and costume, subtext, script analysis/annotation, character profile. Verbatim Theatre: interview, oral history, direct address, dramatisation of direct speech. Process Drama related to Realism: establishing pretext, the 5 Q's (who, what, where, when, why), enrolling, building belief, negotiating, investigating and consolidating role, teacher-in-role, hot-seat, accepting the fiction, framing the action, frozen effigy, mantle of the expert, suspending disbelief, debriefing / derolling, context of enquiry, role-on-the-wall, teacher narration, though-tracking, tension, focus, tableau.
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### Dimensions and objectives

#### Forming (see syllabus p. 2)

By the conclusion of the course of study, students should:

- manage elements of drama to create dramatic action
- use conventions of forms and styles, and skills of drama to shape dramatic action
- synthesise dramatic languages, purposes and contexts to realise dramatic action and meaning.

#### Presenting (see syllabus pp. 2–3)

By the conclusion of the course of study, students should:

- interpret purposes, contexts and texts to communicate dramatic meaning through performance
- manipulate elements of drama through the conventions of forms and styles to realise style in performance
- demonstrate skills of drama to communicate dramatic action and meaning for audiences.

#### Responding (see syllabus p. 3)

By the conclusion of the course of study, students should:

- analyse use of the dramatic languages to facilitate dramatic action and meaning
- evaluate, with supporting evidence, the effectiveness of the dramatic action in communicating meaning to audiences
- synthesise positions about dramatic action and meaning through language conventions and drama terminology.

## Planning 1 (10 weeks)

### Learning experiences

- Workshop to develop skills in:
  - working as an ensemble
  - process drama and improvisation to give and receive offers in believable role using elements of drama such as language, place, space and relationships.
- View recorded live performances in Realism style to:
  - identify elements of drama and conventions of Realism
  - analyse how elements and conventions are used to realise the style, and communicate dramatic action and meaning.
- Interpret a range of Realist texts by different playwrights and from different times and places, by reading and staging, to identify relevant elements of drama, including character, relationships, and use of space and aspects of stagecraft.
- Develop understanding of the conventions of Realistic Acting through studying the work of acting teachers/practitioners such as Konstantin Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, Lee Strasburg and Robert Cohen.
- Use texts in workshops to develop skills in conventions of Realism to interpret purpose, context and dramatic meaning:
  - conventions include fourth wall, believable character, demonstrated in realistic language and voice, and motivated movement
  - Stanislavski's system for actor preparation, including magic-if, subtext, playing objectives, beats and units of action, through line and emotional memory.
- Manipulate the elements of drama (examples above) in combination with conventions of Realism, such as highlighting tension of relationships and subtext, to realise style and to present believable performances.
- Develop acting skills using the conventions of Realism through workshops in voice and movement, to develop dramatic action.
- Develop and apply stagecraft by using the specific performance space, basic set, conventions of blocking, using the stage to enhance meaning and managing stage properties suited to the playscript.
- Develop rehearsal techniques and skills in working as an ensemble by individually committing lines to memory, giving and taking cues as an ensemble, using stage space to avoid masking other actors and refining and reworking acting skills to communicate meaning.
- Provide and explain assessment instrument and standards.
- Provide guidance in selection of playscripts and scene/s, and forming groups for presenting performances.
- Repeat workshops in interpreting texts, using conventions of Realism and elements of drama, demonstrating skills including applying stagecraft and rehearsal techniques to polish performance. Students use selected texts in established groups to communicate dramatic action, realise style and communicate meaning.

### Assessment

Dimension assessed	Presenting
Assessment technique	Performance
Assessment instrument	Stage acting, group performance of published playscript (see syllabus Section 4.5.5)
Assessment conditions	See syllabus Section 4.5.5
Description of instrument	Students select a scene from a published playscript suited to Realism and present it in the Realism style

## Phase 2 (6 weeks)

### Learning experiences

- Use a topical community-based pretext to conduct a process drama that interweaves a variety of ideas to create dramatic action.
- Develop knowledge and understanding about ways to source information and stories about selected pretext/s as stimulus for Verbatim Theatre, e.g. news media, interviews with witnesses to events, observations about their community and students' own stories and experiences.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the ethics, protocols and sensitivities to be observed and applied in collecting personal stories for creating Verbatim Theatre.
- Interpret and analyse a variety of playscripts and performances to build understanding of form and structure, ways to frame action and devices (such as use of symbol and metaphor) to create an artistic concept.
- Manipulate elements of drama, specifically language, relationship, situation, mood and character to create and shape dramatic action and meaning from stimulus materials, such as interview transcripts and recorded interviews.
- Plan opportunities for students to engage with workshops and performances provided by visiting practitioners and/or artist/s in residence.
- Provide and explain assessment instrument and standards.
- Provide guidance in selection of pretexts for scriptwriting assessment.
- Develop understanding of the conventions of scriptwriting by analysing Verbatim Theatre playscripts, including layout/format, nature of the descriptions of locations, settings and character.
- Explain and model scriptwriting process — drafting, workshopping, editing and redrafting.
- Demonstrate and model skills in workshopping with peer actors to enact draft scripts, and use observation and feedback to improve and refine draft playscript.
- Develop playscripts using scriptwriting and workshopping processes to synthesise dramatic languages, selected purpose and context to create and shape dramatic action and meaning.

### Assessment: Assessment instrument 2

Dimension assessed:	<i>Forming</i>
Assessment technique:	Non-practical
Assessment instrument:	Scriptwriting (see syllabus Section 4.5.4)
Assessment conditions:	See syllabus Section 4.5.4
Description of instrument:	Students write a playscript using the conventions of Verbatim Theatre.
Further information:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teachers and students negotiate an agreed theme.</li><li>• Students select a member of their family or the community and interview him/her to gain an oral history of an event/events connected to the agreed pretext.</li></ul>

## Phase 3 (4 weeks)

### Learning experiences

- Engage in pre-performance workshops and activities to:
  - review skills of drama relevant to the Presenting dimension, and conventions of Realism and Verbatim Theatre
  - examine how these conventions and skills are manipulated to facilitate dramatic action and meaning.
- View short excerpts of recorded performances and work individually and in groups to:
  - identify possible meanings
  - analyse the use of stagecraft and acting skills
  - make judgments about particular aspects of the performance.
- Explain and model essay structure and appropriate language conventions and terminology.
- Develop short written responses to the excerpts, stating a position about the performance using language conventions appropriate to essays, e.g. essay structure, paragraphing, use of language and terminology.
- Draft, edit and refine short responses to the excerpts in consultation with peers and teacher.
- Provide and explain assessment instrument and standards.
- View a professional live or recorded live production of a playscript in the style of Realism and/or Verbatim Theatre.
- Engage in post-performance workshops and discussions (e.g. collective memory, using recalling templates, brainstorming) to reflect on moments of dramatic action and meaning relevant to the assessment response.
- Review specific aspects of the assessment task requirements.
- Revisit essay structure and appropriate language conventions and terminology.
- Individually develop response to the assessment task.
- Draft, edit and refine response in consultation with peers and teacher

### Resources

#### **Texts**

The playscript (if available) and its performance attended by the students.

### Assessment: Assessment instrument 3

Dimension assessed:	<i>Responding</i>
Assessment technique:	Extended response (see syllabus Section 4.5.6)
Type of extended response:	Essay
Assessment conditions:	See syllabus Section 4.5.6. Before responding to the assessment instrument, students view a production of a playscript in the style of Realism and/or Verbatim Theatre.
Description of instrument:	Students analyse use of the dramatic languages, particularly the conventions of Realism and/or Verbatim Theatre, and evaluate the production's effectiveness in communicating dramatic meaning to audiences.