

# ASSESSMENT REPORT 2020

## SDD315120 – DRAMA

### Practical Assessment

Thank you, teachers and schools, for the warm welcome and wonderful hospitality extended to all examination panels throughout the exam period. COVID safe presentations and safe set up for marking and assessing was appreciated. There was a great sense of teamwork, support and positivity in all centres. Exams were well prepared, and students demonstrated their skills throughout the program. Some new work was presented, and this was most enjoyable to assess. Parking was a problem in some centres. Please ensure you provide adequate parking for examiners via witches' hats or bollards with signs – 'TASC examiners' attached.

### Creative Elements

Examiners would like to see themes clearly communicated in the program and throughout the program. The linking material gives the students an opportunity to present a strong sense of ownership of their program and enhance their assessment of Criterion 6. Teachers are reminded that allowing students to choose overly sexist or racist themes presented from one perspective only may not be appropriate.

### Timings of Programs

Timings of overall programs were excellent. Please adhere to solo time requirements. Students need to be reminded to adhere to the 2 to 4 minutes time allowance for their solo work. In some cases, solo material was well under time with students presenting work at 1.5 minutes or less. Overall, the script extract and linking material ran to time.

### Placement of Performers

Another repeated note from the last two years – examiners again requested that candidates move back from the examiners desk and into the main performance space to allow for vocal projection and movement. Some panels noted that students presented work less than 3 metres away from the examination desk.

### Solo Performance

Examiners noted that the solo should provide a contrast to the play extract and linking material. The use of explicit language and content should be avoided. This year panels saw more dramatic poetry delivered as monologues. In some cases, students presented works copying YouTube artists. This style of presentation does not give adequate scope for the students to meet the assessment standards. Students are reminded that 'acting out' poetry or prose extracts is not appropriate. More attention to memorisation was suggested by panel members. There was more paraphrasing this year and less polish.

## Dramatic Extracts

Examiners saw several new extracts presented this year for examination. This was refreshing and exciting and cuts were managed well by the teachers. Teachers are reminded that students sitting for most of the play extract gives them little scope to show development of character.

## Administrative Matters

Paperwork was mostly accurate this year. Thank you to all teachers who attended to this note from last year. Mostly original copies of solo material were presented in the booklets. A reminder to teachers that this is a requirement and students and teachers are *not* to retype solo works. There are far too many spelling errors and alteration of the text occurring. In some cases where teachers have shared resources throughout the years, the same errors and omissions are still occurring in works. For example, the genre on paperwork stated a monologue presentation, the student presented a monologue, but the work was clearly poetry by a well-known and recognisable poet. This was not an isolated example.

Attention to appropriate clothing was much better this year. Please continue to ask students to avoid low cut tops, see through tops, midriffs etc. Theatre blacks with a suggestion of costume worked well. In some cases, examiners noted that large multiple earrings, nose rings and highly visible tattoos were a distraction when students were presenting era specific work. Tidy hair is essential in order to allow the examiners to see candidate faces. Again, too many students' broke character or the continuity of their focused program to continually sweep hair off their faces. This has continued to be a distraction.

## Written Examination Paper

A general note from markers was to ensure that students use 1<sup>st</sup> person past tense in their essays as per TASC documents.

Teachers are advised to remind students that the examination booklet clearly states to use a pen and not pencil.

Students need to answer all parts of the question and remember it is correct to underline the play titles they refer to in their essays.

The following question breakdowns are observations from each marker.

### Question 1

- Name up the elements clearly.
- Terminology needed to be clearer. For example, a disc or spinning stage should be referred to as a revolve.
- Students were good at explaining what was used in regard to the technical production elements but found it difficult to provide the links to how they were used to convey mood and or dramatic impact.
- The best responses discussed the mood and dramatic intent and linked elements with clear examples.
- Several students included diagrams of the set but were not able to explain how the sets were used in addressing the essay question.

## Question 2

- Most students had a solid essay structure.
- Introduction mentioned productions, companies, actors and roles; there were clear paragraphs centered on physical and vocal skills; most essays had a good conclusion.
- Putting the show in context (e.g. brief outline) is useful.
- Essays were brief which was surprising given the opportunity to watch online (and re-watch several times) to note solid examples for voice and body.
- Students should consider supporting points with quotations, particularly when discussing voice.
- Students need to make sure they identify which elements of voice and body they are discussing and have several examples for each.
- 2-3 elements of body (e.g. stance, leading center, gesture, eye contact, movement, pace, facial expression) and 2-3 elements of voice (e.g. tone, pitch, accent, volume, pace, pause) should be discussed throughout the essay.
- Focussing on character arc / character development in selection of which moments / points to discuss is important for students to demonstrate A / B ratings – only mentioning one point for voice / body does not show fully how the actor has communicated their character.
- Some students did not fully discuss 2 actors from 2 productions.

## Question 3

- Students should be discouraged from writing about more than one musical in this essay, as it limits discussion on acting technique.
- Stronger answers avoided lengthy plot summaries. A brief overview of the play's context will suffice.
- Some students did not write conclusions to their essays, as they wrote about more than two elements, which was not required.
- Stronger answers provided detailed, specific examples to justify how and why elements were effective or not.

## Question 4

- This question allowed students to demonstrate how they developed and polished their thematic exam presentation.
- Students needed to name the theme.
- Students often found describing the process of developing their theme difficult.
- Students found it difficult to name how they polished their presentation.

## Question 5

- Some responses completely missed identifying the theme and for those that did, some didn't always refer to it.
- The discussion around 'thematic presentation' differed – some students clearly identified chosen texts within the program and others gave more of an overview of the program.
- Many broad responses with varied interpretations around 'performance decisions' (some responses were somewhat vague on what these decisions were and the links to theme and therefore potentially should have avoided this question).
- There were a number of responses that focused solely on the transitions/linking material rather than looking at the entire program – this created limitation.

## Question 6

- Candidates wrote succinctly, but the question asked about intention and 99% didn't address this.
- Students were able to discuss what they did to convey the theme, but many didn't go to the next level to say how. E.g. they used a film clip projected and apart from describing the clip they didn't say how it conveyed their theme.
- There was not a great deal of depth with the "movement" element. Most responses were very superficial.
- Music and use of stage space were used with more depth.
- Students were able to talk well about use of stage space, addressing levels, placement of characters etc. to enhance theme.
- Use of "text" was a little light on. Students didn't really relate back to their script that well. However, they did if they used a poem or something similar in the linking. Often responses didn't reflect the use their own solo work.
- In most responses there was no mention of things like climax, conflict, contrast, timing tension.
- It was enjoyable to read the descriptions of students' programs.
- Many students didn't justify why they used certain elements or mention examples used to enhance theme.

## Question 7

- Very few students answered this question.
- Students who did well were able to explain and use examples about what influence dramatic timing had on their thematic presentation.
- Students forgot to mention their theme to give this essay some context.
- The question asks students to discuss how timing was used in their thematic presentation.
- Better answers communicated the 'moments that mattered' and the effect the timing had on their program.
- Students needed to explain how they used timing with reference to examples. For example, they could have talked about some of the following elements - pause, speed, building tension, suspense, comedic timing, moments of reflection.