



SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

DRAMA
GENERAL YEAR 12

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Sample course outline

Drama – General Year 12

Unit 3 and Unit 4

Semester 1 – Representational, realist drama in *Diving for Pearls*

Week	Key teaching points
1	<p>Review of the key content from Drama General Year 11: dramatic storytelling and drama events. Introduction to the two basic approaches to drama in Drama General Year 12: representational, realist drama and presentational, non-realist drama.</p> <p>Workshop on voice and movement techniques in representational, realist drama using the processes developed by Konstantin Stanislavski: motivation, tempo, circles of attention and psychological gestures focusing on justifying character selection of techniques.</p>
2–4	<p>Workshop: improvisation work exploring forces on families in financial difficulty to understand the concept of living from pay cheque to pay cheque. What are the social costs of living in constant economic uncertainty? What are the patterns in voice and movement for characters living in this economic state?</p> <p>Students are encouraged to listen at home to the program discussing Katherine Thomson’s play and the themes she was exploring via http://www.abc.net.au/rn/legacy/programs/playingthe20thcentury/stories/2011/3087132.htm. Focus of improvisation work includes conventions of improvisation (breaking patterns and creating focus) in representational, realist drama: building variety and guiding an audience to create meaning.</p> <p>Class discussion about linear, narrative structures, including Aristotle’s plot structures (‘mythos’) and its impact on dramatic storytelling in improvisation and scripted drama. Causality and its relationship to dramatic structure explored for its impact on drama practice. Links to representational, realist drama and linear narrative structures discussed.</p> <p>Process drama to guide introduction to <i>Diving for Pearls</i> by Katherine Thomson: forces, values and drama practice in 1990s Victoria. Workshop focused on empathising with a town in rapid economic change. Discussion about Di Kelly’s essay in the play text <i>High Hopes Not Enough</i> for clues about forces on the play.</p> <p>Task 1 introduced</p>
5–7	<p>Workshops on conventions of interpreting a script (motivation, tempo, circles of attention and psychological gestures), refined through improvisation in representational, realist drama. This includes experimentation with the elements of drama to explore imagination and character mapping, given circumstances for <i>Diving for Pearls</i>. Improvisations are shaped by particular viewpoints to create dramatic meaning that educates and presents the forces of rapid economic change and financial stress in families.</p> <p>Task 3 introduced</p> <p>Theatre review of a viewed performance (live or, if access is limited, digital). Students will attend one of two performances from a local theatre company. Notes about characterisation, blocking, design and technology and audience responses are collated by students on that viewed live performance. Notes are summarised into one page to be used for an in-class review for Task 3.</p> <p>Script extract of <i>Peter and Alice</i> by John Logan reviewed. Discussion about ways of achieving the opening stage directions and action of the play. Students focus on a sense of a balance between fantasy and the realism of the public space described. Activity reinforces the knowledge and skills of Task 3.</p> <p>Task 2 introduced</p> <p>The importance of keeping notes and planning documents organised to help prepare for Task 2. Review of good writing techniques, including selected use of tables, diagrams, illustrations with annotations and overviews in extended answers in Drama.</p>

Week	Key teaching points
	<p>Selection of groups for script interpretation of key scene or section. Task 1 includes design work and one workshop process with a student from another group as the director. The workshop is based on a strategy used by one of three directors: Stanislavski, Stella Adler or Michael Chekhov.</p> <p>Workshop on conventions of documenting representational, realist drama (script annotations, blocking notations and plan and elevation views of blocking and basic design).</p> <p>Scripts-extract activity looking at the contrast between <i>Diving for Pearls</i> and <i>King Tide</i> by Katherine Thomson (pages 1–5) for blocking and movement approaches.</p> <p>Week 7: Task 1 presented in class for feedback. Marking key used to guide teacher feedback and student planning for Task 1 development.</p>
8–11	<p>Review of cooperative group work processes (memorising, improvising, interpreting, listening, accepting, delegation of roles, developing an agreed approach) in preparing for a script interpretation of a key scene or section.</p> <p>Director workshops scheduled for Week 9 as part of Task 1.</p> <p>Review of strategies to present space and time (planned uses of space) when working in different performance areas focusing on representational, realist drama. Discussion includes ways in which audiences are positioned to identify and engage with representational, realist drama.</p> <p>Design planning to reflect the particulars of one of two stages: proscenium arch and thrust stages in representational, realist drama. Design will include some lighting, sound and costumes, properties and stage elements that demonstrate appropriate application of principles of design and visual elements. Emphasise design approach will reflect selective realism/metonymic approaches.</p> <p>Final planning for design and the transitions between performances. Review of safe working practices in drama in purpose-built performance spaces.</p>
12–13	<p>Task 3 completed in class during Week 12</p> <p>Workshop processes undertaken to introduce the key content of the externally set task. Groups formed to plan and rehearse possible responses to externally set task. Students are encouraged to review in the lead-up to final written task key knowledge, skills, techniques and processes relevant to the task. Students encouraged to work collaboratively with their peers to maximise the practical understanding of the particulars of the possible task before it is completed under invigilated conditions. The focus of the in-class task will be unseen and closed book on the day of the assessment.</p> <p>Task 4 completed in class during Week 13</p>
14–15	<p>Task 1 due Week 14</p> <p>Review of the importance of structuring answers in drama responses to include drama terminology, clear language and specific examples to explain and justify responses to drama prompts.</p> <p>Task 2 completed in class during Week 15</p>
16	<p>Class discussion about the notes taken for Task 3. Review of Standards guide from the SCSA DVD for example of good responses. Students collate key ideas they can bring to their work for Task 3.</p> <p>Review of student responses in the externally set task and summarise strategies that would improve student engagement with the knowledge and skills assessed through the task.</p> <p>Review of intellectual property rights and performance rights in drama and examples of posters, programs and publicity in representational, realist drama for effective techniques and approaches.</p> <p>Review key learning of the unit and summarise the key concepts that will remain the same in Unit 4 and key concepts that will change in Unit 4.</p>

Semester 2 – Presentational, non-realist drama in *The Venetian Twins*

Week	Key teaching points
1	<p>Review of the impact of representational, realist drama on acting and design. Introduction to the key ways that the unit approach will change in Unit 4. Highlight that unit will include a scripted performance to an external audience with a more detailed approach to integrating design roles.</p>
2–4	<p>Student presentations of videos sourced on YouTube or elsewhere that exemplify the concept of ‘stock characters’ in drama. In groups, students will create five stock characters that could be the focus of an improvised performance. Review of programs like <i>Whose line is it anyway?</i> (US or UK editions), focusing on use of stock characters, conventions in improvisation and relationship with audience.</p> <p>Workshop on Commedia dell’Arte and the key approaches to the elements of drama, including working with the parameters of stock characters, improvisation and comedy, slapstick, stage fighting, whole body characterisation and directly interacting with live audiences. Introduction to five most common stock characters and the three classes of society in Commedia dell’Arte. Review of the role of audience with buskers and other street performances. Review of safe working practices in drama in purpose-built or found performance spaces.</p> <p>Task 5 introduced</p> <p>Scripted interpretation with comic asides and completion of one design or directing role for one other group.</p> <p>Review of the storyline of <i>The Venetian Twins</i>. Comparison with extract of Plautus’ <i>The Brothers Menaechmus</i> and Shakespeare comedy structures to explore the relevant forces that shaped the development of these drama forms and styles.</p> <p>Review some of the videos from YouTube on the channel ‘Popular Plautus & Menaechmi videos’ https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLVKIWON7JzOS6LAV1_S4fcak3jOdf3LG.</p>
5–7	<p>Use of design principles and visual elements to support a scripted performance with comic asides for design role. Students will plan a design that supports dramatic meaning and remains flexible for these types of performances. They will schedule their time between their acting ensemble and the group they’re supporting with directing or design.</p> <p>Review of effective group work (managing social and emotional intelligences) to build group cohesion and time management skills (effective use of paired analysis, planning matrices, concentration, managing distractions) in drama.</p> <p>Planning for posters, programs and publicity for presentational, non-realist drama for external performance of extracts of <i>The Venetian Twins</i>. Consideration of venue for the performance: purpose-built spaces versus found spaces in the school community and beyond. Discussion about safety, access, audience members with special needs and the intended impact of the performances.</p> <p>Week 7: Task 5 presented in class for feedback. Marking key used to guide teacher feedback and student planning for Task 5 development</p>
8–12	<p>Workshops completed in class to explore with students the elements of drama, refined through improvisation and rehearsal, to create role or character through processes developed by John Wright (see <i>Why is that so funny?</i>) for physical comedy. Workshops also will explore how to emphasise, through application of the elements of drama identified themes, selected approaches and theories about dramaturgy in Commedia dell’Arte.</p> <p>Workshops will acknowledge the elements of drama in performance preparation processes (improvisation to explore audience alienation, gestus and historification) for presentational, non-realist drama.</p> <p>Ongoing work completed with students on juxtaposition and transition in role, character, space, time, forms and/or styles, including leaps of time, flashback and flash forward, fragmented and cyclical structures conventions of interpreting a comic script refined through improvisation in Commedia dell’Arte. For Task 6, students will explore conventions of documenting presentational, non-realist drama (director’s vision, design statements, actors’ notes) and performance and audience behaviours (active audience participation) appropriate to presentational, non-realist drama.</p> <p>Continuing work on approach to selected scenes and negotiating times to work on design or directing approaches with partner groups.</p> <p>Review in class of principles of design and visual elements, as relevant to key scenes. Workshops on each of the design roles to consolidate student understanding and explore ways that approaches can be adapted to the comic approach taken in Commedia dell’Arte.</p>

Week	Key teaching points
13	<p>Approach to the performance consolidated to include careful review of the spaces of performance, the choice of venue for the production and its impact on the performance. This includes a clear plan to make use of the performance space and the audience space for each scene or section, and the transitions managed for dramatic impact.</p>
14–15	<p>Final preparations, including technical and dress rehearsals, before final performance to an external audience.</p> <p>Task 5 and Task 6 due Week 14</p> <p>Review of the impact of the performance on the audience, including the effectiveness of the comic asides and engaging the audience in a presentational, non-realist performance. With teacher assistance, students take notes on the use of the elements of drama to signal to the audience drama forms and styles (comedy and Commedia dell'Arte). Students condense these notes to a single page to help the address prompts for Task 7. Review of the quality of student responses from Task 2 and strategies for students to improve the quality of their responses in Task 7. This includes review of forms of communication stipulated in the syllabus.</p> <p>Task 7 completed in class under invigilated conditions the end of Week 15</p>
16	<p>Review of the key learning in this unit. Student feedback on what has been most effective this year and what could be modified for future delivery of Drama.</p> <p>Review of intellectual property rights and performance rights in drama in a twenty-first-century context, including adapting original sources for performance events like Task 5.</p>