

Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board

SD806 Speech and Drama

Report on 1996 External Examination

Practical

For the most part the work was well prepared and presented. There was, however, a tendency in some centres for the presentation of excessively long pieces of prose as against very short poems. When this occurs there is the obvious difficulty for students in sustaining a long passage while at the same time there is insufficient poetry for them to demonstrate understanding and versatility in *both* narrative and poetic forms. Clearly a balance is required. It is the overriding advice from Examination Panels that potentially HA+ candidates should be encouraged to choose *challenging poetry*.

Often a candidate's decision to drape themselves inelegantly on the floor or over a rostrum block detracts from the potential impact of the piece.

The examination panels strenuously counsel against the use of the *same* piece of prose by a small sample of candidates in the one centre.

A prompter should be provided by the examination centre. Candidates must not call for prompts, nor will the panel members provide the required prompt.

In some centres theatre lamps were inadequately focussed on the candidate. Determination of appropriate distance from the examining panel was occasionally a problem. In some centres candidates were positioned very close to the panel thereby ensuring maximum discomfort for both parties.

Dramatic excerpts were generally well chosen. In a couple of instances however, the material was very 'juvenile' and afforded little opportunity for either character interpretation or real ensemble interaction.

If, as occurs in some centres, students appear in *two* dramatic excerpts within the required time limit, they should be afforded scope to fulfil the criteria in both excerpts otherwise there is little point in the adoption of this stratagem.

Students should be *prepared* to work confidently with *stage properties*. Too often it seemed that these were last minute additions to the program and student unfamiliarity with these diminished the veracity of the program.

Folders were well organised and presented. Facilities were appropriate as was the provision of desks and lamps for the assessment panel.

The assessment panels strenuously recommend that teachers endeavour to see the work being undertaken by their colleagues in other centres.

Guidelines for external practical assessments will again be discussed at 1997 moderation meetings along with the syllabus requirements.

General Comments

There was a pleasing tendency towards longer and more detailed answers in both sections of the paper.

Students had clearly seen a wide range of live theatre presentations and were able to discuss the range

However, there was some tendency to adapt, with limited success, prepared answers, rather than focus on the precise requirements of the question.

Where there are a number of parts or aspects to a question, candidates are advised to give all parts of the question adequate attention.

Candidates sometimes failed to specify by name productions to which they referred. This problem occurred in both sections of the paper but was of particular concern in the Experimental Theatre section where a lack of title and topic sometimes made it difficult to place the ensuing discussion in any meaningful context.

Section A

Candidates in general often did not have the necessary vocabulary to discuss acting techniques and theatre production elements. There was a disturbing reliance on expressions such as ‘tacky’, ‘over the top’ and ‘normal lighting’ rather than an appropriate and precise terminology.

Many candidates were unclear about the names of productions, directors and actors in major roles. There was a tendency for some candidates to discuss characters rather than the performer’s interpretation of character.

Section B

Many candidates relied heavily on textual references, especially plot summary and character description, rather than on reference to their own productions. This was a particular problem in Question 6 where the discussion of minor characters was frequently placed in terms of the text rather than of the production.

Candidates need to be strongly alerted to the fact that in all Section B answers they must make *detailed reference to their own productions* if they are to receive a satisfactory award.

Statistical Summary

SD806

Award Summary	Outstanding Achievement (OA)	18
	High Achievement (HA)	71
	Satisfactory Achievement (SA)	162
	Reassessed into neighbour	17
	Total	268
Gender Breakdown	Males	61
	Females	207

Summary of external ratings

	A	B	C	D
Criterion 4	18	69	137	44
Criterion 6	23	70	135	40
Criterion 8	30	66	131	41
Criterion 9	19	82	135	28
Criterion 10	13	83	109	59