



VICTORIA JUNIOR COLLEGE

JC 2 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2017

H2 Theatre Studies and Drama

9726/01

Paper 1 World Theatre and Drama

3 hours

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**Instructions to candidates**

Answer **three** questions in total.

Section A: Answer Question 1(a) **and either** 1(b) **or** 1(c)

Sections B and D: Answer **two** questions, each from a **different** section.

In answering the questions, you should make reference to all the texts you have studied.  
Answer each question on a fresh sheet of paper.

**Information for candidates**

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question. The total number of marks for this paper is 75.

You are reminded of the need for good English & clear presentation in your answers. Use sketches or diagrams where necessary.

You are also reminded that this is not a literature paper, write about theatre.

At the end of the examination, fasten your work separately in accordance to each question.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, glue or correction fluid.

## Form and Concepts

The following extract is the last act taken from *Silly Cow* by Ben Elton (1991).

The play is a slick, razor-tongued modern satire on the viciousness of tabloid journalism with an ingeniously dramatic dénouement. Set in 1991, the play takes place in the living-room of Doris Wallis' flat. Doris Wallis is a newspaper columnist and reviewer with a talent for caustic insults and career assassination. She is being sued by the actress Trudi Hobson, after writing an article which savaged the respected thespian with accusations of small talent and large thighs. The queen of malice isn't worried because she knows how to manipulate the judge to see things her way.

### Characters:

Doris

Peggy – Doris' personal assistant

Douglas – Doris' accountant

The extract begins with Doris' celebration with Peggy of her victory against Trudi Hobson in court is ruined when she realised Douglas has accidentally discovered her envelope of recreational drug.

Read the following passage very carefully and then answer the questions that follow it, making certain that your answers are entirely relevant to the extract.

- Doris** What the hell are you talking about, Douglas?
- Douglas** Oh, come now, Miss Wallis, you know me well enough to realize that I am not and never have been one of these types, so common in the last decade, who believe that they need only obey those parts of the law which they choose. Oh, well, I know 5  
you think me a senile old fool.
- Doris** Yes.
- Douglas** It doesn't matter anyway, I just wanted you to understand my point of view. It's a police matter now. (*He turns to go to the door*)
- Doris** You'd better stop right there, Douglas! (*She grabs a paper knife*) 10  
*Douglas is at the door.*
- Douglas** How very fitting, how very apt. My entire thesis is confirmed, out comes the flick-knife, the switch-blade.
- Doris** Douglas, it's a paper knife.
- Douglas** Rich or poor, this is where drugs will inevitably lead you. It will 15  
be gang colours, automatic assault rifles and shoulder-held missile launchers next. Goodbye, Miss Wallis. I am sorry for you.
- Doris** Grab him, Peggy. (*She drops the knife, leaps at him and grabs him*)

	<i>But Douglas spins her round and pins her to the wall. During the following, Peggy discreetly gets something out of her handbag.</i>	20
<b>Douglas</b>	Don't be a fool, madam! I was eight years a soldier...	
<b>Doris</b>	Peggy!!	
	<i>Peggy coshes Douglas, who falls to the ground, senseless, by the sofa</i>	25
<b>Peggy</b>	Oh, my God!	
<b>Doris</b>	Oh, my God. ( <i>Approvingly</i> ) Nice move, Peggy. I had no idea you carried a cosh. ( <i>She grabs the envelope, checks it</i> )	
<b>Peggy</b>	My mother makes me.	
<b>Doris</b>	And quite right too. Thank you very much, Douglas, and, incidentally, when you wake up you're sacked.	30
<b>Peggy</b>	( <i>kneeling beside Douglas, stunned</i> ) He's dead.	
<b>Doris</b>	He can't be.	
<b>Peggy</b>	( <i>very upset</i> ) He is.	
<b>Doris</b>	The bastard.	35
<b>Peggy</b>	( <i>suddenly she screams hysterically</i> ) Ahhhhh! What have I done, what have I done? I've killed him! Why didn't you tell me you took drugs, why didn't you say?	
<b>Doris</b>	Come on, Peggy! Calm down, love, calm down. We're in this together, we'll work it out. ( <i>She hugs her</i> ) We've got plenty of time, we'll make a plan. Yes, that's it, we'll make a plan. Nobody knows about this, nobody's coming to get you... Nobody's coming to get you.	40
<b>Peggy</b>	( <i>weeping on her shoulder</i> ) How. ... there's people in the street, on the stairs, we'll be caught, I know we'll be caught.	45
<b>Doris</b>	Well, if we can't get it out, we've got to give it a good reason to be here...	
<b>Peggy</b>	( <i>trying to think</i> ) Well ... well ... he came to check something about your accounts.	
<b>Doris</b>	Yes, not bad as far as it goes, but it doesn't explain why he's dead, does it?	50
<b>Peggy</b>	It's my fault, Doris, I killed him, I should take the consequences. What . . . what if I cosh you as well, to prove you weren't involved, then call the police and tell them I went mad?	
<b>Doris</b>	I don't know if you noticed, Peggy, but the last time you coshed someone they ended up dead.	55
<b>Peggy</b>	Well, I could be gentle.	
<b>Doris</b>	No, I don't want you to.	

<b>Peggy</b>	Well, what if I tied you up?	
<b>Doris</b>	Yes, good thinking, Peggy, not bad, but it's got to look like he was the aggressor. Yes, that's good actually, Peg. Now come on, tie me up, we'll do it here.	60
<b>Peggy</b>	Have you got any rope?	
<b>Doris</b>	Yes, loads in the bedroom.	65
<b>Peggy</b>	Good. Why?	
<b>Doris</b>	Never mind about that now... I'm scared of fires, it's for escaping, now go and get it. It's in the wardrobe, Peggy, and there's a set of handcuffs under the pillow, bring those as well.	
<b>Peggy</b>	Right.	70
	<i>Peggy goes into the bedroom. Doris sits in the chair up stage, facing the audience. Peggy returns with rope and handcuffs</i>	
<b>Doris</b>	Now, we've got to get the plot straight. These are the basics, Peggy, OK? We plant the coke on his corpse so that we can say he came round to blackmail me, and in the process ties me up.	75
<b>Peggy</b>	But, Doris, none of these things happened.	
<b>Doris</b>	I know that, Peggy, but he's not here to deny it, is he? Now tie me up!	
	<i>Peggy reluctantly begins to do it</i>	80
<b>Peggy</b>	I still don't see...	
<b>Doris</b>	God, you're so thick sometimes, Peggy. Listen, he's tied me up, right? He's threatening me with blackmail, OK? You return, having popped out for some hubris to put on the pizzas . . . there's a struggle, during which you triumph, all right? It's just our word, there's nobody else to tell a different story, we'll get away with it. Tighter, Peggy, it has to be convincing.	85
<b>Peggy</b>	<i>(struggling)</i> I'm doing my best, Doris...	
<b>Doris</b>	Ow! Yes, that's tight enough, I can't move.	
<b>Peggy</b>	There, that's pretty good, I was a Girl Guide, you know.	90
<b>Doris</b>	Fascinating; handcuffs. Now get the coke from under the typewriter, I hid it there. Put it in his pocket and then you can ring the police...	
	<i>Peggy gets the envelope. She returns to Doris</i>	
<b>Peggy</b>	I'm scared, Doris.	95
<b>Doris</b>	<i>(gently)</i> Don't be scared, Peggy, I'll look after you. Really, Peggy, I mean it. I'll always protect you. Now just put the package in Douglas's pocket...	
	<i>Peggy puts it in Doris's pocket</i>	

	No, Douglas's pocket, Peggy, watch my lips, darling. Put the drugs in Douglas's pocket...	100
	<i>Peggy is still tightening the ropes</i>	
<b>Peggy</b>	<i>Put the drugs in Douglas's pocket.</i> (gently, but straight into Doris's face) So, I can't act, can I?	
<b>Doris</b>	What?	105
<b>Peggy</b>	So you don't think I can act.	
	<i>Doris screams suddenly. In the flickering half-light Peggy tears off her brunette wig; underneath she is blonde.</i>	
	(Shouting in Doris's face) Viper! Slut! Filthy cockroach! You have no human heart, you cannot feel, your soul is the soul of a witch. It is rotten, cold and dead and you must die! You're poison, do you hear me?! Bitter, bitter gall!	110
	<i>Peggy is Trudi Hobson; she now becomes her, turning before our eyes into an eccentrically mannered actress. Her walk changes into the slightly showy elegance of those who value their dance training, no matter how many years ago it was. Her accent becomes the casual but terribly refined drawl of those who have been taught how to speak properly. She pushes her wild blonde hair off her forehead. The quiet, mousy Peggy has completely vanished. Although she will continue to be called that.</i>	115
	Yes, darling. It's me. The silly cow you said couldn't act. Well, I've acted pretty well the last six months, haven't I, darling? (She walks to the door) I'll just make us more cosy, shall I? Wouldn't want to be disturbed, would we? Now, I can pop the fusette back in so you can take a really good look at who I am. She steps outside for a moment. The Lights come back on.	120
<b>Doris</b>	This isn't possible.	125
	<i>Peggy enters</i>	
<b>Peggy</b>	That's theatre, love. The art of the not-possible, a wonderful world of make-believe which we, the actors, make you believe in. Oh, it's easier than you think when one puts one's mind to it. A good cossie and wig, impeccable references forged by a sweet, sweet prop master I know. I offered maximum enthusiasm for minimum salary and you fell for it.	130
<b>Doris</b>	But it's ... it's so totally out of proportion.	135
<b>Peggy</b>	Out of proportion? Darling, you ain't seen nothing yet. The play isn't over.	

<b>Doris</b>	What are you going to do?	
<b>Peggy</b>	Destroy you, my dear. I swore from the very first moment, win or lose, I would bring you down. Oh, it hasn't been so very arduous. Seven hours acting, three days a week. At Rose Bru' we thought nothing of improvising through the night; all we needed was a bottle of cheap plonk, a fragment of Strindberg and we were in Heaven.	140
<b>Doris</b>	You're mad, totally raving barking out of your ruddy tree!	145
<b>Peggy</b>	<i>(pouring herself a drink)</i> Well, do you know, I think all actors have to be a little mad, or how could we do what we do? We're so very different from ordinary people, you see. We hurt so very deeply. That is why I had to plan my wicked plan, do you see? I had to do it. The actress in me said I must. And, oh, what a performance! The most wonderful and fulfilling of my career.	150
<b>Doris</b>	There is a dead accountant on the carpet!	
<b>Peggy</b>	Yes, that's a bonus I must say.	
<b>Doris</b>	Peggy...	
<b>Peggy</b>	Trudi, darling. Peggy is a character, a part; I loathe these young actors who can't distance themselves from their characters, don't you? It's so silly.	155
<b>Doris</b>	Trudi...	

## SECTION A: UNSEEN PASSAGE

Answer Question 1 (a) **and either** (b) **or** (c)

- 1 (a) As a director, write performance notes on the dramatic mood or atmosphere you intend to create in this extract for an effective performance. [10]

### AND EITHER

- (b) You are an actor preparing to play the part of **either** Doris **or** Peggy and you wish to make your chosen role as effective as possible. Write preparatory notes on the most important aspects of your performance.

[15]

### OR

- (c) As a designer, what suggestions would you make for an effective combination of set, costumes and lighting for a production of this extract from *Silly Cow*? [15]

## **SECTION B: JACOBAN COMEDY**

Answer **One** question

- 2** Assess the advantages and disadvantages of presenting Jacobean Comedy in modernised or updated ways. You should refer primarily to costumes, settings and lighting. [25]

**OR**

- 3** “Volpone: Good morning to the day; and, next my gold:  
Open the shrine, that I may see my saint.” (Volpone, Act 1, Scene 1)

Discuss the presentation of greed in Jacobean Comedy you have studied, referring closely to performance detail. [25]

**OR**

- 4** As an actor, discuss in detail the performance required of a leading male character in Jacobean comic drama you have studied. [25]



## SECTION D: AMERICAN DRAMA

Answer **One** question

- 5 With close attention to particular scenes or episodes, examine the presentation and significance of fatherhood in American drama you have studied.

[25]

**OR**

- 6 "Horace: I was in love with you. But why did you marry me?  
Regina: I was lonely when I was young." (The Little Foxes, Act 3)

Discuss the presentation of marriage in American drama you have studied. Use specific scenes or episodes as examples to illustrate your answer. [25]

**OR**

- 7 "Capitalism affects the social constructs of the traditional American family unit; family members are not valued in terms of their intrinsic worth, but rather as economic producers and consumers."

With this comment in mind, how is family presented in American drama you have studied. Use specific scenes or episodes as examples to illustrate your answer.

[25]

**END OF PAPER**