



# THEATRE IN ACTION SYLLABUS 2022



Speech New Zealand  
 Founded 1964  
 as New Zealand Speech Board  
 Incorporated as a Charitable Trust

# Theatre in Action

## Syllabus 2022

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# Aims and Objectives

The aim of this syllabus is to:

- develop appreciation of the art of theatre
- develop increasing competence in the techniques and skills of presentation, interpretation and creation of drama and theatre.

It is designed to:

- complement the Speech New Zealand Speech and Drama syllabus
- work alongside a wide range of community activities in drama and theatre
- complement the Drama Strand of the Revised New Zealand Arts Curriculum at primary and secondary levels.

Candidates will learn to:

- collaborate with others in a group situation
- communicate creative, personal and researched ideas
- communicate and interpret ideas through poetry, stories and drama
- develop ensemble presentational skills
- communicate with audiences.

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Our website provides information  
including details of our syllabuses.

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# Introduction to Grade Examinations in Theatre in Action

All examinations in this syllabus are designed specifically for group presentations. All groups should give themselves a name.

## Group Sizes

A small group is 2 to 6 performers.

A large group is 7 to 20 performers.

The time limits remain the same regardless of group size.

Please see General Information on Page 22 for details on managing entries, presentations and audiences.

## Learning Criteria

The broad learning outcomes for candidates in groups using this syllabus are:

1. Learning the language of drama
2. Developing ideas in drama
3. Communicating and interpreting meaning in drama
4. Understanding drama in context

Specific learning criteria for each activity are listed after the syllabus prescription for each grade. These give specific information to candidates and teachers and should be read in conjunction with each grade to assist in understanding syllabus requirements and recognising the elements inherent within each section.

## Glossary

A detailed glossary of terminology is to be found at the back of the syllabus.

## Resources

The Speech New Zealand website, [www.speechnz.co.nz](http://www.speechnz.co.nz), carries an increasing range of resources, many written especially for this Theatre in Action syllabus.

Other resource material, available from time to time, is advertised on the website.

Specific requests for information regarding clarification of the syllabus content or management of the examinations are welcome and should be addressed to the National Office.

[See P22 for general information, entry procedure and examination procedures.]

# Initial

*Time: 20 minutes*

These activities introduce candidates to examinations in a relaxed and friendly manner.

1. Present a performance based on a myth, legend or fairytale.
2. Devise and present a performance piece for a specific purpose/audience: e.g. class on Anzac Day. *(Total performance time 10 – 15 minutes)*
3. Talk with the examiner about your ideas and reasons for your choices in performance.

Bring with you a programme as on page 23 and a copy of the text or a plan of action for Sections 1 and 2.

Text may be memorised, or in your own words developed from a plan of action.

## Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- Create a scene with a simple shape
- Believe in characters
- Be focused within the scene
- Listen and respond to other actors
- Share performance with the audience

Section 1:

- Base performance on a specific myth, legend or fairy story

Section 2:

- Devise a performance to suit purpose/audience

Section 3:

- Listen carefully and respond to the examiner
- Share your ideas with audibility and clarity
- Interact courteously with others in the group

Notes:

# Grade 1

*Time: 20 minutes*

1. Present a performance based on a myth, legend or story.  
Include the **use of mood** and the **element of action** to enhance the storyline.
2. Devise and present a performance piece based on personal experience or an actual event for a specific purpose/audience, e.g. on bullying for a junior assembly or class.  
*(Total performance time 10 – 15 minutes)*
3. As a group, talk with the examiner about the performance and reflect on how you developed the mood and the element of action.

Bring with you a programme as on page 23 and copy of the text or a plan of action for Sections 1 and 2.

Text may be memorised, or in your own words developed from a plan of action.

## Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- Create a well-defined dramatic shape
- Listen and respond to other actors
- Sustain belief in character and the action
- Use motivated movements
- Use space and movement to enhance the dramatic tension
- Fit performance pieces within the given time frame

Section 1:

- Base performance on a specific myth, legend or story
- Include use of mood and the element of action to enhance the storyline

Section 2:

- Base performance piece on personal experience or an actual event
- Prepare performance for a specific purpose and/or audience

Section 3:

- Listen carefully and respond to the examiner
- Share ideas with audibility and clarity
- Interact courteously with others in the group



## Grade 2

*Time: 25 minutes*

1. Present a performance piece that includes the **techniques of movement and voice** to enhance the storyline.
2. Devise and present a performance piece using at least one of the following technologies: **props, costumes, masks or puppets** for a particular purpose/audience, e.g. a story to entertain a younger group. Include the use of levels within the scene.  
(*Total performance time 15 – 20 minutes*)
3. As a group, join in discussion with the examiner and reflect on the processes used in the development of pieces.

Bring with you a programme as on page 23 and copy of the text or a plan of action for Sections 1 and 2.

Text may be memorised, or in your own words developed from a plan of action.

### Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level you need to apply all the skills learned for the previous grades AND ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- Communicate ideas clearly with the audience

Section 1:

- Use techniques of movement and voice to enhance the storyline

Section 2:

- Devise a performance piece for a particular purpose/audience
- Use at least one technology: props, costumes, masks or puppets within that performance to enhance the storyline
- Use levels to enhance the presentation

Section 3:

- Listen carefully and respond to the examiner and others in the group
- Share ideas with audibility, clarity and courtesy

## Grade 3

*Time: 25 minutes*

1. Present a text-based performance piece from a published play or story, which includes **techniques of voice, facial expression, gesture and movement** to enhance the storyline.
2. Devise and present a performance piece for a particular purpose/audience. Include at least **two conventions** to enhance the storyline.  
Range: slow motion, freeze frame, soundscape, mime, chorus of voice or movement, narration, status. *(Total performance time 15 – 20 minutes)*
3. As a group, join in discussion with the examiner and reflect on:
  - a) conventions and techniques used in the process of rehearsals for both sections and how they enhanced performance.
  - b) performance choices in devised piece (Section 2) that relate to its specific purpose and audience.

Bring with you a programme as on page 23 and copy of the text or a plan of action for Sections 1 and 2.

Text may be memorised, or in your own words developed from a plan of action.

## Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level you need to apply all the skills learned for the previous grades AND ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- Show all members working as a team to achieve the overall intention of the scene

Section 1:

- Use an extract from a published play or story to develop the performance
- Use the techniques of voice, facial expression, gesture and movement to enhance the storyline

Section 2:

- Devise the performance piece for a particular purpose/audience
- Use at least two conventions within the performance to enhance the storyline

Section 3:

- Express personal ideas on techniques and conventions used in rehearsals and how they enhanced the storytelling in performance
- Express personal ideas on the content and performance choices made in the devised piece and how they were developed for the specific purpose/audience

## Grade 4

*Time: 30 minutes*

1. Present a text-based performance from a published play, musical or story, which uses **techniques of body, voice, movement and space** to enhance the storyline. The text for this section must be memorised.
2. Devise and present a performance piece for a particular purpose/audience. Include at least **three conventions** to enhance the storyline.  
Range: as previous grades, plus flashback/flash-forward, spoken thoughts.

*(Total performance time 20 minutes)*

3. As a group, join in discussion with the examiner and reflect on:
  - a) techniques and conventions used in the process of rehearsal and how they enhance performance.
  - b) performance choices in the devised piece that relate to the specific purpose and audience.

Bring with you a programme as on page 23 a copy of the text for Section 1 and a copy of the text or a plan of action for Section 2.

## Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level you need to apply all the skills learned for the previous grades AND ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- Show how characters change or develop through the scene
- Work as a team to shape the dialogue and achieve the objective of the scene

Section 1:

- Memorise the text
- Use an extract from a published play, musical or story
- Use the techniques of body, voice, movement and space within your performance to enhance the storyline

Section 2:

- Devise the performance for a particular purpose/audience
- Use at least three conventions within the performance to enhance the storyline
- Memorise the text or use your own words developed from a plan of action

Section 3:

- Express personal ideas on the techniques and conventions used in rehearsals and performance and how they enhanced the storytelling
- Express personal ideas on the content and performance choices made in the devised piece and how these helped understanding for the specific purpose/audience
- Support ideas with reasons or examples from the work presented

# Grade 5

*Time: 30 minutes*

1. Present a text-based performance from a published play, musical or story, which includes at least **two elements** to enhance the storyline.  
Range: tension, space, focus, role, symbol, time.
2. Devise and present a performance piece for a particular purpose/audience. Include at least **three conventions** to enhance the storyline.  
Range: as previous grades, plus any others you may choose.  
*(Total performance time 20 minutes)*
3. As a group, create a list of time, situation, place and role for each scene.
  - a) List the elements, techniques and conventions used in Sections 1 and 2 and reasons for their inclusions.
  - b) Be prepared to discuss the relevant background research, discussions, games/exercises and materials used in preparing and rehearsing for Sections 1 and 2.As a group, take part in discussion and reflection on these with the examiner.

**NOTE:** Five business days prior to the first day of tour, submit to National Office:

- i) A programme for the performances, which should include titles, cast, and the specified audience/purpose for Section 2
- ii) A copy of the text for Section 1
- iii) A copy of the text or a plan of action for Section 2
- iv) A copy of the lists for Section 3

## Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level you need to apply all the skills learned for the previous grades AND ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- All roles and characters should be sustained throughout the performance
- All roles and characters should be performed with confidence

Section 1:

- Memorise the text
- Use an extract from a published play, musical or story
- Use at least two elements within the performance to enhance the storytelling

Section 2:

- Memorise the text or use own words developed from a plan of action
- Suit the performance to the specified purpose/audience
- Use at least three conventions within the performance to enhance the storytelling

Section 3:

- Express personal ideas on the elements, techniques and conventions used in rehearsals and performance and how they enhanced the storytelling
- Express personal ideas on relevant background research, discussions, games/exercises and materials used in preparation and rehearsals
- Support ideas with reasons or examples from the work presented

**NOTE:**

In discussion sections both knowledge and the ability to discuss that knowledge are of equal value.

## Grade 6

*Time: 35 minutes*

1. Present a text-based performance from a published play, musical or story, which includes a range of elements and conventions to enhance the storyline.
2. Devise and present a performance based on a theme.  
Give the performance a title.  
This should be prepared for a specific audience and a specific purpose.  
*(Total performance time 25 minutes)*
3. As a group, create a list of time, situation, place and role for each scene and the conventions and elements used. Provide a written statement of intention for each scene.  
As a group, take part in discussion and reflection on these with the examiner.

**NOTE:** Five business days prior to the first day of tour, submit to National Office:

- i) A programme sheet which includes details of both performance pieces, including cast, and for Section 2 the title of your devised piece, the specific audience and purpose of the performance
- ii) A copy of the text for Section 1
- iii) A copy of the text or a plan of action for Section 2
- iv) A copy of the list and statement of intention for each scene



## Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level you need to apply all the skills learned for the previous grades AND ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- Show clear relationships between characters
- Show a clear development of dramatic shape

Section 1:

- Memorise the text
- Use an extract from a published play, musical or story
- Use a range of elements and conventions to enhance the storytelling

Section 2:

- Memorise the text or use your own words developed from a plan of action
- Devise the performance using a clear theme
- Give piece a title which will relate to the audience
- Suit the performance to the specified audience and purpose

Section 3:

- Justify aspects of interpretation of characters
- Identify and explain elements and conventions used to develop and enhance storytelling in both sections
- Discuss how you achieved the stated intention
- Support ideas with reasons and examples from the performances

**NOTE:**

In discussion sections both knowledge and the ability to discuss that knowledge are of equal value.

# Grade 7

*Time: 40 minutes*

1. Present a text-based performance from a published play, musical or story, which includes a range of elements and conventions to enhance the storyline.
2. Devise and present a performance using a novel or poem as a stimulus.  
Give the performance a title.  
This should be prepared for a specific audience and purpose.

*(Total performance time 25 minutes)*

3. As a group, plan and present a demonstration explaining
  - a) A drama technique of your choice
  - or*
  - b) An element of your choice.
 This should be presented as to other drama students of a similar age or experience level. Specify the audience. *(Time limit 5 minutes)*
4. As a group, provide a written statement of intention for the scenes in 1 and 2. This should include place, time, situation and role. Include a list of processes used in rehearsal including vocal exercises.  
As a group, take part in discussion and reflection on these.

**NOTE:** Five business days prior to the first day of tour, submit to National Office:

- i) A programme sheet which includes details of both performance pieces, including cast, and for Section 2 the title of the devised piece, the specific audience and purpose of the performance
- ii) A copy of the text for Section 1
- iii) A copy of the text or a plan of action for Section 2
- iv) A copy of the statements of intention for Sections 1 and 2

## Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level you need to apply all the skills learned for the previous grades AND ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- Use space, movement, focus and commitment to enhance the dramatic tension
- Use voice and speaking to support and enhance the demands of the roles/characters

Section 1:

- Memorise the text
- Use an extract from a published play, musical or story
- Use a range of elements and conventions to enhance the storytelling

Section 2:

- Memorise the text or use your own words developed from a plan of action
- Devise performance using a stimulus from a poem or novel
- Give piece a title which will relate to the audience
- Suit performance to the specified audience and purpose

Section 3:

- Involve your whole group in the presentation and demonstration
- Be creative in developing means to convey the information
- Structure the presentation to include an introduction, key points and a conclusion
- Ensure content is relevant to the specified audience and fits the time limit

Section 4:

- Identify and justify vocal techniques and drama games used in rehearsals and/or in the performances to enhance the intention
- Support ideas with reasons and examples from the performances

### **NOTE:**

In discussion sections both knowledge and the ability to discuss that knowledge are of equal value.

# Grade 8

*Time: 45 minutes*

**This examination may be conducted with an audience present.**

1. Present a text-based performance from a published play, musical or story, which includes a range of elements and conventions to enhance the storyline. In performance, clearly establish the genre of the piece.
2. Devise and present a performance based on a historical event or character and using the influence of a drama theorist.  
Give the performance a title.  
This should be prepared for a specific audience and purpose.  
*(Total performance time 30 minutes)*
3. As a group, plan and present a demonstration explaining a genre in theatre.  
This should be presented as to other drama students of a similar age or experience level.  
Specify the audience.  
*(Time limit 5 – 6 minutes)*
4. As a group, create a written statement of intention for each scene that show aspects of genre (Section 1) and specific techniques, elements and conventions considered in each performance and how the influence of the drama theorist is shown in Section 2.  
As a group, take part in discussion and reflection on these.

**NOTE:** Five business days prior to the first day of tour, submit to National Office:

- i) A programme sheet which includes:-  
Section 1 – genre and cast  
Section 2 – title, theorist highlighted, specific audience and purpose of the performance
- ii) A copy of the text for Section 1
- iii) A copy of the text or a plan of action for Section 2
- iv) A copy of the statements of intention for Section 4

# Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level you need to apply all the skills learned for the previous grades AND ...**

For Sections 1 and 2:

- Performances should show secure ability to think, feel, move and speak in role and have impact on chosen audiences

Section 1:

- Memorise the text
- Use an extract from a published play, musical or story
- Use a range of elements and conventions to enhance the storytelling
- Use specific techniques to develop the genre of the performance

Section 2:

- Memorise the text or use own words developed from a plan of action
- Devise performance using a clear influence from a drama theorist
- Give piece a title which will relate to the audience
- Suit performance to the specified audience and purpose

Section 3:

- Involve your whole group in the presentation and demonstration
- Be creative in developing means to convey the information
- Structure presentation to include an introduction, key points and a conclusion
- Ensure content is relevant to the specified audience and fits the time limit

Section 4:

- Identify and justify aspects of genre in performance (Section 1) and influence of the drama theorist (Section 2) and specific techniques, elements or conventions that were used in the process of developing these performances
- Support ideas with reasons and examples from the performances

**NOTE:**

In discussion sections both knowledge and the ability to discuss that knowledge are of equal value.

# Advanced Certificate

*Time: 50 minutes*

**This examination may be conducted with an audience present.**

1. Present a programme based on a theme and for a specified purpose or occasion and audience.  
Give the work a title.  
The programme must contain an extract from a published play and devised work and may use other performance styles. *(Time limit 30 minutes)*
2. As a group, plan and present to a specified audience  
*Either*
  - i) An informative demonstration on a specific drama convention and supporting techniques related to your programme
  - or*
  - ii) An informative presentation on an aspect of your programme. This may be background material on a period, style or writer or other relevant information for your audience. *(Time limit 10 minutes)*
3. As a group, prepare a written statement to show the planning and rehearsal process for each section. Brief supporting material may be included. This will be used as the basis for a group discussion with the examiner on planning, preparation, rehearsal and performance of Sections 1 and 2.

**NOTE:** Five business days prior to the first day of tour, submit to National Office:

- i) A programme for Section 1 detailing the theme, the title, the purpose or occasion, the material used, the cast, and the specific audience for whom the performance is intended
- ii) A copy of all texts for Section 1
- iii) The written statement for section 3. You may include brief supporting material if you wish

## Learning Criteria

**In order to achieve well at this level you need to apply all the skills learned for the grade examinations AND ...**

### Section 1:

- Show competency in a range of vocal and performance skills and styles
- Suit content to the specified theme, audience and purpose or occasion
- Introduce theme, link pieces and build to a clear conclusion
- Develop and present a programme with impact and power

### Section 2:

- Involve your whole group in the presentation and demonstration or presentation
- Be creative in developing means to convey the information
- Structure presentation to include an introduction and key points logically developed to a clear conclusion
- Ensure content is relevant to the specified audience and fits the time limit
- Present ideas and information with impact

### Section 3:

- Extend, justify or express personal opinions on aspects identified in your written statement
- Justify or express personal opinions on your presentations in Sections 1 and 2
- Support your ideas with reasons and examples from your performances

### **NOTE:**

In discussion sections both knowledge and the ability to discuss that knowledge are of equal value.

# General Information

All examinations in this syllabus are designed for group presentations.

## Group Sizes

A small group is 2 to 6 performers.

A large group is 7 to 20 performers.

The time limits remain the same regardless of group size.

## Large groups please note:

- Before the time of entry liaise with the National Office to ensure the standard examination venue provides sufficient performance space.
- If an alternative venue has to be found, additional to the venue hired for other examinations, the cost of the alternative venue may be added to the base entry fee for the group overall.
- Where a home-based, cost-free venue, e.g. at a school, can be provided and the use of that venue for 'Theatre in Action' is less than half a day, the estimated cost of examiner travel to the venue may be added to the base entry fee for the group overall.

## Presentation

Chairs and a small table will be provided – any other required props are the responsibility of the candidates and must be kept to a minimum.

The use of simple accessories, such as hat, jacket, shawl, and skirt, if appropriate, are recommended. Full costume and makeup are not encouraged unless being used as a specified technology. Rehearsal 'blacks' are a simple base and can be very effective.

Groups may include a 'technical' assistant if required to operate sound devices for simple effects, or an accompanist for musical numbers.

Please note it is the responsibility of the group to provide instruments or any technical requirements.

Remember that it is the work of the candidates that is being assessed and NOT technical effects.



## Time limits

Time limits throughout are the maximum allowed and include set up and strike time and any changes in dress. Groups which go over time limits may find there is insufficient time to complete later sections.

In devised work, or with smaller groups, the purpose of a section may well be fulfilled in a shorter time. Candidates should not feel compelled to use the whole time available, particularly in the lower grades.

## Audiences

An audience is not compulsory but is encouraged for Grade 8 and Advanced Certificate. Audiences will not normally be present during the discussion section of examinations, although an examiner MAY call for questions from an audience immediately after each of the first two sections are presented.

At all levels liaise with the National Office BEFORE TIME OF ENTRY to discuss space in the examination venue and to discover availability of space for audience members.

When several groups are presenting work, a morning, afternoon, or evening presentation may be arranged to create a sense of occasion. Liaise with the National Office BEFORE TIME OF ENTRY, so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

## Programmes

**A written programme must be provide to the examiner for each group, together with clear copies of all scripted prose, verse or drama used**

The programme should include:

- Section 1 – the title and the author  
the setting, the characters (and cast) and a very brief synopsis (no more than 80 – 100 words) of the play or storyline
- Section 2 – the title and (where applicable) the theme  
an outline of the performance piece or a text and a very brief explanation of how the piece evolved

Where specified the intended purpose, occasion, audience and venue must also be included.

**From Grade 5 upwards the reuquired exam material, texts or other stipulated requirements are to be submitted to National Office 5 business days prior to the first day of tour.**

## Assessments

In addition to specific performance skills noted in the achievement objectives at each level, all groups will be assessed on:

- listening and cooperation skills
- focus and teamwork
- peer courtesy and consideration

Grades will be given as follows:

<b>NOT ACHIEVED:</b>	Further practice and development are needed to meet the level.
<b>PASS:</b>	Most achievement objectives are met at a basic level but some require further development.
<b>CREDIT:</b>	Most achievement objectives are met adequately.
<b>MERIT:</b>	Most achievement objectives are met competently.
<b>HONOURS:</b>	Most achievement objectives are mastered.

Where some works are particularly commendable in any of these categories examiners may award a 'plus' on the candidate's report.

The plus will also appear on the certificates.

The examiner's decision is final.

## Reports and Certificates

Each group will be assessed as a whole by the examiner who will provide **ONE** written report. All members listed on the entry form of successful groups will each receive a certificate.

## Equivalent Levels

The level required at each grade approximates to the level required at each grade of Speech New Zealand's Speech and Drama syllabus.

Where there is an approximation or connection to NZQA levels these are found in the chart on page 29.

These are given as guidelines only. More detailed information will be found in the resource section of the Speech New Zealand website.

When adult groups are entered the maturity and experience of members and the skills they wish to develop should be taken into account.

## Terminology – Conventions and Elements

Many of the definitions used within this syllabus and defined in the glossary have been developed for use within the current school drama curriculum [The Arts in New Zealand Curriculum]. The actual titles given to techniques in the glossary may well be known by other names to many experienced practitioners. They may be recognised as variations or extensions of familiar activities.

The conventions and elements listed in the glossary are intended as guidelines and possible tools for tutors.

Conventions are strategies for working in drama and may be used in two ways:

- for dramatic effect to move the storyline forward within a presentation
- in preparation, exploration and rehearsal as tools to achieve or explore dramatic purpose.

Candidates may use own terminology, but also need to be familiar with those named in the syllabus. What is important is that students develop an understanding and a vocabulary of skills and techniques that are transferable when they work with a variety of tutors and directors and move on to other classes or theatre situations.

# Entry Procedures

## Entries

Entries are completed online. Please see the website for details.

Accurate entries must be received by the National Office no later than the closing date. Fee payments should be made by the payment due date. Entry closing dates and payment due dates are specified on the Speech NZ website.

## Inaccurate Entries

If a replacement certificate is needed due to an inaccurate entry, a replacement certificate fee plus postage will be charged.

## Substitutions

In the event of illness of a group member a substitution may be made. The substitute may carry a script to enable the group to perform. However, particularly in the event of this happening in a smaller group, a re-entry may be more appropriate.

## Refunds

Please see website for refund policy.

Speech New Zealand's guidelines for refunds comply with the legal requirements of the various Consumer Protection Acts.

## Examination Centres

The National Office will notify candidates of the place and time of attendance.

## Attendance

Candidates must attend the examination centre 15 minutes before the examination time stated on their notification.

Candidates who are unable to attend the examination must notify their teacher as soon as possible. Teachers must contact the examination supervisor if it is on examination day, or National Office if it is prior to the examination day. If an alternative date/time cannot be accommodated within the tour, the candidate can be transferred to an alternative examination tour. A transfer fee will be applied. Please see website for details. Non-attendance without notification to a Speech NZ representative will result in the examination being recorded as Did Not Sit and fees being forfeited.

# Procedures within Examinations

Examinations are usually conducted in English, but brief introductions or phrases in other languages are acceptable. If groups wish to use more elements of other languages they should

provide an English translation and notify National Office at the time of entry so this can be accommodated.

Name tags should be worn by all candidates and will be supplied by the Examination Supervisor.

Time limits must be strictly observed. Candidates may be disadvantaged in discussion if prepared work exceeds time limits.

## Equipment

It is the candidates' responsibility to provide any equipment necessary for the presentation of their work.

If candidates intend to use electronic equipment they should advise the National Office **at time of entry** so that they can schedule the timetable to accommodate this.

## Examination Material

Examination material specifically requested in advance should be submitted to National Office five business days prior to the first day of tour to allow the examiner time to be fully conversant with the content. It is expected that the candidate will bring a hard copy of all submitted examination material to the examination.

**At Grade level:** Where candidates do not provide required material for the examination within the specified time period this omission will be reflected in the level of achievement awarded.

**At Advanced Certificate level:** Where a candidate does not provide the required material within the specified time the examination **may not be able to proceed**.

## Trainee Examiners

From time to time a trainee examiner will be in the examination room and, under the direction of the examiner, may take part in the examination.

## Videoring

Videoring is NOT permitted during examinations unless it is for NCEA purposes and prior arrangements have been made with Speech New Zealand. Speech New Zealand may at times request consent to record examinations for a specific purpose that you will be notified of.

## Examination Reports and Certificates

One report only will be issued to the group and this will be distributed to teachers by National Office.

Each candidate named on the entry form of a successful group will be awarded a certificate.

Reports and certificates are the property of the candidates.

## Complaints Procedure

Examination Results Appeals or complaints must be made in writing within 14 days of

receiving the examination result. Please see website for more details.

For noon-result related complaints, please see the website for details.

## Observers / Audience

Speech New Zealand reserves the right to invite or exclude observers at any examinations.

## Resources

The Speech New Zealand website, [www.speechnz.co.nz](http://www.speechnz.co.nz), carries an increasing range of resources many written especially for this Theatre in Action syllabus.

Other resource material, available from time to time, is advertised on the website.

Specific requests for information regarding clarification of the syllabus content or management of the examinations are welcome and should be addressed to the National Office.

# Equivalent Grades and Levels in Action:

# Theatre in

School Year	Drama Curriculum Level (approximately)	NZQA Levels (approximately)	Suggested SNZ Grade for Theatre in Action
Up to and inc Yr 4	1 (2 & 3)		Initial
Yr 4/5	1 (2 & 3)		Grade 1
Yr 5/6	2 (3 & 4)		Grade 2
Yr 7/8	3 (4 & 5)		Grade 3
Yr 8/9	4 (5 & 6)		Grade 4
Yr 9/10	5 (6 & 7)	NCEA Level One	Grade 5
Yr 10/11	5 (6 & 7)	NCEA Level One	Grade 6
Yr 11/12	6 (7 & 8)	NCEA Level Two	Grade 7
Yr 12/13	7 (8)	NCEA Level Two	Grade 8
Yr 13 - post school/ adult	8	NCEA Level Three/ Scholarship	Advanced Certificate in Theatre in Action

In Theatre in Action all grades and the Advanced Certificate are assessed to a standard similar to the Speech New Zealand Speech and Drama syllabus.

The above chart is a guide only for teachers and students working with the school curriculum documents and Speech New Zealand examinations.

For an in depth analysis of how some NZQA levels may approximate specific aspects of other Speech New Zealand syllabuses, please refer to the resource section of Speech New Zealand's website.

# Glossary

## Action

What happens to a character externally (what they are doing) and internally (what they think and feel, their motives and beliefs at the time).

## Chorus of Movement/Chorus of Voices

A dramatic convention in which individuals or groups provide explanation, elaboration, or commentary on the main action of a drama through either body movements or voice.

## Conventions of drama

Established procedures in drama that use techniques or processes to represent, organise or interpret ideas.

Conventions are strategies for working in drama and may be used in two ways:

- for dramatic effect to move the storyline forward within a presentation
- in preparation, exploration and rehearsal as tools to achieve or explore dramatic purpose.

*Conventions include: Role on the Wall, Soundscape, Chorus, Flashback/Flash forward, Freeze Frame, Slow Motion, Status, Spoken Thoughts, Mime, Overheard Conversation, Narration, Canon, Telephone Conversation.*

## Devised drama

Drama that is developed for performance from an idea rather than a specific scripted play. It may incorporate story, text, verse, music, movement, mime etc. A script may develop as part of the process.

The original stimulus (e.g. poem/text) should be no more than 25% of final material presented.

## Elements of drama

The components of drama: role, time, space, action, tension, focus, mood, symbol. These sometimes include contrast (movement and stillness, light and dark, sound and silence). See separate entries.

## Flashback/Flashforward

Shifting backwards or forwards in time so that participants or the audience can experience or investigate action or context from another perspective.

## Focus

- i) The meaning or understanding that the participants will take away from the drama about the human condition. The central event, character, theme, issue, or problem of a drama or part of a drama.
- ii) The point that demands the audience's attention either in place, or a moment in time.
- iii) The participant's, or student's, focus or concentration on the work.

## Freeze-frame

A dramatic convention in which the members of a group use their bodies to make an image or tableau capturing an idea, theme, or moment in time; an individual may act as a sculptor for the group; also called a group sculpture, tableau, photograph.



**Genre**

A broad category or type of play that has a tradition or history and is identifiable by specific characteristics, social functions, and cultural contexts (e.g. mime, Elizabethan, comedy, tragedy, farce, absurdist, cowboy and western, silent film...)

**Hot seating**

A dramatic convention in which class members question or interview someone who is in role (e.g. as a character from a play or novel) to bring out additional information, ideas, or attitudes about the role.

**Mime**

Action and character are suggested using gesture, movement, and facial expression without words or sounds.

**Narration**

Storytelling by an external narrator or by characters in the drama.

**Rehearsal process**

Consideration of the elements, techniques, conventions and steps that have been used in rehearsing and preparing for a presentation or performance.

**Reflect and comment**

Look back on what the individual (or group) has done: the techniques used, their details, the reason for their use and the actor's individual evaluation of their use.

**Role**

Using imagination to identify with someone else in order to explore and represent experience from their viewpoint – being in role.

**Role on the wall**

A dramatic convention in which an important role is represented in picture form “on the wall” (usually on a large sheet of paper), so that information can be collectively read or added to as a drama progresses.

**Slow motion**

The process of slowing down and exaggerating movement, facial expression, and gesture to heighten tension or to isolate a particularly important moment.

**Soundscape**

A sequence of sounds shaped to portray a scene, event, environment, or mood.

**Space**

- i) Identifies the environment to create the setting and scene.
- ii) Use of space including levels to create interest and focus.
- iii) Use of spatial relationships between characters.

**Spoken thoughts**

In this convention a student in role speaks the private thoughts of their character to add tension or provide information. Sometimes students who are not in role may be asked to supply possible thoughts for the student in role (also known as voices in the head).

**Status**

A person's standing in relation to another at a given moment. In drama, it is not about ranking in a community, but about behaviour. Using status becomes a tactic to achieve an objective. There is high-status behaviour and low-status behaviour.

**Style**

The recognised manner or distinguishing way in which a performance is made and communicated; style often relates to a particular historical period or movement.

**Sub-Text**

That which is 'hidden' or assumed to be hidden beneath the surface of the dramatic dialogue; a felt pressure behind the words.

**Symbol**

A sign or thing in the drama that stands for something else. e.g. A key – security, freedom, power: Fire - Sun, hope, magic, passion, anger.

**Techniques of drama**

The procedure for achieving a specific purpose. In drama: use of voice, facial expression, gesture, posture and movement, and the thoughts of the character that motivate the actions.

**Technologies**

Things that can be used to enhance a performance.

*Puppets, masks, set, music, lighting, props and costumes*

**Tension**

- i) Mental pressure or emotional intensity to provoke a response, focus attention, or heighten involvement.
- ii) Difference in viewpoint.

**Theme**

A central topic, basis of idea that is developed.

**Time**

Identification of the time you are exploring or in which you are performing.

**Title**

A word, or words, that give the distinctive name of a presentation. For the purpose of this syllabus when a 'title' is requested it should be different from the 'theme'. e.g. Theme – People in History: Title – Mayhem at Madame Tussauds.

**Writing in role**

Writing that is done as the character in a drama or story, or in rehearsal. e.g. letters or diaries, to deepen understanding of the role.



