



**EDUCATION RESOURCES FOR
DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDENTS IN THE ONLINE WORLD
APRIL 2020**

These resources have been created for the online learning world. You may know some of the selected plays and some may be new. It's always great to make discoveries. Whichever is the case, Australian Plays recommends that teachers access and read a script before selecting it for their students.

Each script and the accompanying activities are designed as a *mini unit* of work or *series of lessons* for students to do solo, in pairs and in collaboration to take place over several days or spread across two or more weeks. It all depends on your students and the learning context.

For each selected play there are activities that include:

- Suggested ways to jump into the script - individually, in pairs, in breakout groups, as a class, 'live' in the online space OR to prepare and bring back
- Monologues, Duologues and Scenes to read, learn, present and 'perform', that can be assessed 'live' or recorded by students and then submitted for assessment
- Ways for students to consider the design elements of theatre; set, properties, costume, sound, make-up. From reading the script they can make some creative decisions – what would this play look like and sound like? (Without sneaking looks at the productions shots first!)
- Suggestions for analysing and evaluating the script by reading professional reviews of previous productions and comparing and contrasting
- Listening to interviews with playwrights about their play, why they wrote it, and the stories they want to tell
- See production trailers or highlights that offer glimpses into the world of the play
- Access Education/Teachers notes prepared especially for the show that contain a whole stack of other activities for teachers to use with students!

Links to the curriculum: at the end of this resource there are two tables that link resources and the study of the plays to the Australian Curriculum in the Arts Drama and to aspects of each of the senior curricula in Drama/Theatre. They are suggestions only but may offer educators way to consider why and how these scripts address learning areas and assessment.

If you aren't able to have a school production this term, consider how one of these plays can be your 'production' in the online space.

So, consider your students, what are they into? Which script might offer them some new learning about plays and theatre? Over to you...and them.

Meg Upton
Education Curator
Australian Plays

EXPLORE THE AUSTRALIAN PLAYS WEBSITE:

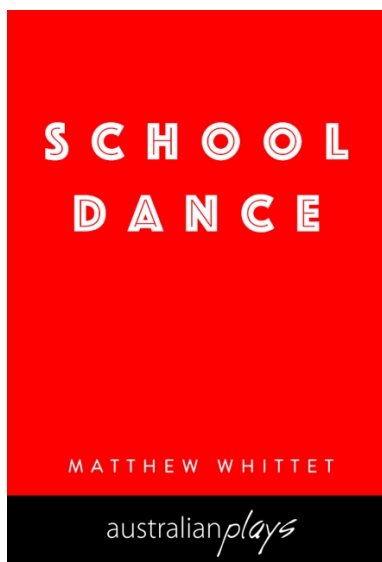
Australian Plays YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/AustralianPlays>

Here you and your students will find an incredible series of digital offerings all from living, contemporary Australian playwrights, talking about their plays, why they write for the stage, what prompts them to write, the stories they choose to write. The channel also offers insights into major arts festivals, networks and theatre companies who champion playwriting and playwrights.

- **RED DOOR** - <https://australianplays.org/reddoor>
- **BLAKSTAGE** - <https://australianplays.org/blakstage/media-gallery>
- **OF THE ISLAND** - <https://australianplays.org/oftheisland>
- **IN CONVERSATION** - https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKMLRd6FZNkBDUtmVhrztsl5oZC__4wro
- **AUSTRALIAN THEATRE FORUM** - <https://australianplays.org/atf>
- **NATIONAL PLAY FESTIVAL** - <https://australianplays.org/npf/video>
- **PLAYBOX** - <https://australianplays.org/playbox>
- **SYDNEY FESTIVAL** - <https://australianplays.org/sydney-festival-2020>

On the Australian Plays website <https://australianplays.org/> you will find links to:

- **MALTHOUSE EDUCATION** - <https://australianplays.org/malthouse-education>
- **STATE THEATRE COMPANY OF SA EDUCATION RESOURCES** - <https://australianplays.org/statetheatresaeducation>
- **STATE OF PLAY COLLECTED ESSAYS** - <https://australianplays.org/state-of-play>
- **WOMEN IN THEATRE DATABASE** - <https://australianplays.org/wits>



SCHOOL DANCE BY MATTHEW WHITTET

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN PLAYS COLLECTION - <https://australianplays.org/script/ASC-1437>

This is a story about 3 teenagers – 15 year olds Matt, Luke and Jonathon. They're meeting up before a school dance. They're on a mission. And they're losers. Matt has been pining for a girl in his class all year, and this is the night he's decided to finally ask Hannah Ellis to dance with him. But all three of them are on the lookout for their mortal enemy, Derrick Sturgess, the school bully. But when Hannah Ellis passes them by and heads into the dance, she sees Luke and Jonathon, but fails to see Matt. This sets off a chain reaction, and Matt starts to disappear altogether. He is no longer visible.

Jonathon and Luke freak out. Jonathon has an idea and goes into the dance to find his older sister Joanie. She tells him a tale of a girl in her year who disappeared the year before. She tells Jonathon to go somewhere safe until she works out how to help. Jonathon grabs Luke and Matt and they go on their BMXs to their secret place. The Point. Whilst the boys are there, Matt slips away. He meets the invisible girl Danika, and she takes him to the land of invisible teens. Here he is introduced to a strange and fantastical world, where shy, ghostlike teens wander quietly surrounded by the toys of their youth, from a time when things were simpler. But things in this land are much more dangerous than they seem. *School Dance* is about acts of bravery. Of facing your own self-loathing and coming out on top. It's a play written for ages 15 up, using a very strong pop language Inspired by 80s cartoons and John Hughes films.

SUITABLE FOR STUDENTS AGED 15-18 (SOME LANGUAGE, SOME SUGGESTED VIOLENCE)

SETTING AND STYLES:

School Dance is an Australian play set in a pop culture landscape of bmx bikes, Smurfs were popular and mirror balls still part of 'the social'. Stylistically it is pop culture, cartoon-esque, episodic, fantasy, flashbacks, comedy

CHARACTERS:

Matt

Luke

Jonathan
Hannah Ellis
Derek Sturgess
Joanie - Jonathan's sister
Danika
Joanie / Unicorn
Mogwai/Little Guy
Big Guy, Elf, Owl, Luke's Dad

ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES:

SUGGESTIONS FOR READING THE SCRIPT:

- Read the entire play in your own time or as directed by your teacher
- Allocate characters across the group, doubling or sharing if required
- Do a 'live' reading of the script in episodes across a couple of sessions OR
- Allocate specific scenes for smaller groups/pairs to prepare and present back to the group

POSSIBLE DUOLOGUES TO LEARN AND PERFORM:

DUOLOGUE 1: Joanie and Danika (with Narrator where necessary) pages 12-13

- Divide into a few sets of pairs and rehearse the scene between Joanie and Danika – a flashback to when Danika starts disappearing.
- Begins: A flashback in which we see Joanie and Danika
- Ends: Danika flees into the world

DUOLOGUE 2: Matt and Luke (with Narrator) pages 16-18

- Divide into a few sets of pairs and rehearse the scene between Matt and Luke where 'the magic' begins to happen
Begins: And as the point works its magic on the boys
Ends: They indicate for the narrator to shut up

MONOLOGUE: Narrator pages 18-20

- The role of the narrator in *School Dance* can be voice over or present in the scene – but you are probably going to prepare this in the virtual space so you could speak to camera!
Begins: As they sit in silence, their minds drift
Ends: the more he'll start to fade away

'STAGING' THE PRODUCTION:

While not being able to see a production of the show at this point in time, you can put your imagination to work, noting in the script how the set is designed, what the action suggests and how the stage directions inform what might be required.

- How do you imagine this play would be staged?

- Create a Pinterest page or other digital scrapbook with images of set pieces, costumes and properties – upload to a group share drive – consider colours, textures, time, era – draw on the script as a prompt
- Sketch a part of the set you feel is key to the play
- Design a costume for the character you are playing

CHECK OUT THE FOLLOWING LINKS:

- **Windmill Theatre:** <https://www.windmill.org.au/show/school-dance/> this link provides a background to the production, images and program
- A *School Dance* video promo: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fLCU6s3EdkI>

REVIEWS: WHAT DO THE CRITICS SAY?

Critical reviews are one person's perspective of a theatre performance. They inform but they are not the 'definitive' analysis of a production. Consider the following two reviews. Compare and contrast them with your reading of the script.

- What further information about the play, the style, the direction, the acting and design do these reviews offer you?
 - Are they favourable? Critical?
 - Would you go and see the play based on the review?
1. Arts Hub - March 10 2012
<http://au.artshub.com/au/news-article/reviews/performing-arts/school-dance-188128>
 2. Sydney Morning Herald - Jan 14 2013
<http://readnow.mediamonitors.com.au/ReadNow.aspx?45AoubBJO7>
 3. Sydney Daily Telegraph - Jan 16 2013
<http://readnow.mediamonitors.com.au/ReadNow.aspx?45C1c5yBONN>

ARTICLES

1. *The Land of Invisible Teens* – Elissa Blake, Sydney Morning Herald, Jan 11 2013
<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/the-land-of-invisible-teens-20130110-2chbt.html>
2. Adelaide Festival: School Dance - Samela Harris, The Advertiser (Adelaide Now), March 7 2012
<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/entertainment/festivals/school-dance/story-fnb4gl49-1226292370874>

INTERVIEWS

- Time Out Sydney - Interview with Matthew Whittet, Writer and Performer
<http://www.au.timeout.com/sydney/theatre/features/11667/school-dance-matt-whittet-interview>
- Revenge of the Nerds – Interview with Matthew Whittet by Benjamin Cooper and Dee Jefferson
<http://www.thebrag.com/2013/01/28/theatre-interview-school-dance/>
- Video interview with Matt Whittet for Real Time TV by Keith Gallasch
http://www.realtimearts.net/feature/realtime_tv/10938

The following two tables offer links to the Australian Curriculum – the Arts and general capabilities – and to aspects of each of the State and Territory senior curriculum in Drama/Theatre Studies.

CURRICULUM LINKS: THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

LEARNING AREA	DESCRIPTION / EXAMPLES OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
THE ARTS - DRAMA	<p>In Drama students across all bands/year levels, explore the following Elements of drama including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles of narrative (story) Viewpoints – multiple/different Forms – structures, devised, scripted Skills, techniques and processes – making and responding including: Role, character and relationships, voice and movement, language, ideas and dramatic action, Audience (particularly how to ‘perform online’) Materials – voice, body, props, costumes, lighting, sound, space
CAPABILITIES	
LITERACY	<p>LITERACY IN THE ARTS</p> <p>In the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, students use literacy to develop, apply and communicate their knowledge and skills as artists and as audiences.</p> <p>Through making and responding, students enhance and extend their literacy skills as they create, compose, design, analyse, comprehend, discuss, interpret and evaluate their own and others’ artworks.</p> <p>Each Arts subject requires students to learn and use specific terminology of increasing complexity as they move through the curriculum. Students understand that the terminologies of The Arts vary according to context and they develop their ability to use language dynamically and flexibly.</p>
NUMERACY	<p>NUMERACY IN THE ARTS</p> <p>In the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, students select and use relevant numeracy knowledge and skills to plan, design, make, interpret, analyse and evaluate artworks.</p> <p>Across The Arts subjects, students recognise and use: number to calculate and estimate; spatial reasoning to solve problems involving space, patterns, symmetry, 2D shapes and 3D objects; scale and proportion to show and describe positions, pathways and movements; and measurement to explore length, area, volume, capacity, time, mass and angles.</p>

	Students work with a range of numerical concepts to organise, analyse and create representations of data relevant to their own or others' artworks, such as diagrams, charts, tables, graphs and motion capture.
CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING	<p>CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING</p> <p>Responding to the challenges of the twenty-first century – with its complex environmental, social and economic pressures – requires young people to be creative, innovative, enterprising and adaptable, with the motivation, confidence and skills to use critical and creative thinking purposefully.</p> <p>This capability combines two types of thinking: critical thinking and creative thinking. Though the two are not interchangeable, they are strongly linked, bringing complementary dimensions to thinking and learning.</p> <p>CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING IN THE ARTS</p> <p>In the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, critical and creative thinking is integral to making and responding to artworks.</p> <p>In creating artworks, students draw on their curiosity, imagination and thinking skills to pose questions and explore ideas, spaces, materials and technologies.</p> <p>They consider possibilities and make choices that assist them to take risks and express their ideas, concepts, thoughts and feelings creatively.</p> <p>They consider and analyse the motivations, intentions and possible influencing factors and biases that may be evident in artworks they make to which they respond.</p> <p>They offer and receive effective feedback about past and present artworks and performances, and communicate and share their thinking, visualisation and innovations to a variety of audiences.</p>
PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY	<p>PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY</p> <p>Personal and social capability involves students in a range of practices including recognising and regulating emotions, developing empathy for others and understanding relationships, establishing and building positive relationships, making responsible decisions, working effectively in teams, handling challenging situations constructively and developing leadership skills.</p>

	<p>PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY IN THE ARTS</p> <p>In the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, students identify and assess personal strengths, interests and challenges. As art makers, performers and audience, students develop and apply personal skills and dispositions such as self-discipline, goal setting and working independently, and show initiative, confidence, resilience and adaptability.</p> <p>They also learn to empathise with the emotions, needs and situations of others, to appreciate diverse perspectives, and to understand and negotiate different types of relationships.</p> <p>When working with others, students develop and practise social skills that assist them to communicate effectively, work collaboratively, make considered group decisions and show leadership.</p> <p>The study of English as a system helps students to understand how language functions as a key component of social interactions across all social situations.</p>
<p>INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING</p>	<p>INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING</p> <p>Intercultural understanding is an essential part of living with others in the diverse world of the twenty-first century. It assists young people to become responsible local and global citizens, equipped through their education for living and working together in an interconnected world. Intercultural understanding combines personal, interpersonal and social knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Intercultural understanding stimulates students' interest in the lives of others. It cultivates values and dispositions such as curiosity, care, empathy, reciprocity, respect and responsibility, open-mindedness and critical awareness, and supports new and positive intercultural behaviours.</p> <p>Though all are significant in learning to live together, three dispositions – expressing empathy, demonstrating respect and taking responsibility – have been identified as critical to the development of Intercultural Understanding in the Australian Curriculum.</p> <p>Drama and the study of others' stories greatly contributes to these dispositions</p>

STATE SENIOR SYSTEM	LINKS/CONNECTIONS – some or all of the following in an online world
HSC Drama (New South Wales)	Australian Drama and Theatre Dramatic Traditions in Australia Contemporary Australian Theatre Practice The Voice of Women in Theatre Approaches to Acting Significant plays of the 20 th Century
VCE Drama & Theatre Studies (Victoria)	Drama Unit 2 – Australian Identity Area of Study 1: Using Australia as inspiration Area of Study 2: Presenting a ‘devised’ performance – in an online space Area of Study 3: Analysing a devised performance Theatre Studies Unit 2 – Modern Theatre Styles and Conventions Area of Study 1 – exploring modern theatre styles and conventions Area of Study 2 – Interpreting scripts
QCAA Drama & Drama in Practice (QLD)	Drama - Units 1-4: Share, Reflect, Challenge, Transform including: Cultural inheritances of storytelling A range of linear and non-linear forms Realism, including Magical Realism Associated conventions of styles and texts Theatre of Social Comment Contemporary performance Associated conventions of styles and texts Inherited texts as stimulus (for making own)
Tasmanian Department of Education	Drama Foundations 2 Learning about different drama texts About storytelling How to review theatre (not necessarily live!) Vocal and movement skills How to turn a script into an ‘online performance’ Drama Foundations 3 How to create characters from scripts Vocal techniques for characterisation How to review and evaluate theatre About theatrical genres How to interpret drama texts
SACE - South Australia NTCET – Northern Territory	Drama – Stage 1 Responding to drama – analysing and evaluation – written mode

	<p>Dramatic synthesis – present a dramatic produce in ‘online presentation mode’ (at present) or a written response</p> <p>Drama – Stage 2</p> <p>Students analyse texts and other materials, (online) performance, and their own learning</p> <p>Students experience diverse perspectives and challenge their imaginations</p>
WACE – Western Australia	<p>ATAR syllabus</p> <p>Outcome 1 – Drama ideas</p> <p>Outcome 2 – Drama skills and processes</p> <p>Outcome 3 – Drama responses</p> <p>Outcome 4 – Drama in society</p>
BSSS – Australian Capital Territory	<p>The resource and scripts included addresses a range of units including:</p> <p>Comedy</p> <p>Design for the Stage</p> <p>Lighting and sound design</p> <p>Realism</p> <p>Theatre for young people</p>

[australian*plays*.org]