

Assessment Specifications

Level 3 Drama 2026

Published in October 2025

General information

Domain:	Drama Studies
Standards:	91514, 91518
Assessment method:	Examination, end of year
Assessment medium:	Printed paper

[Drama subject page](#)

[National secondary examinations timetable](#)

Information relating to all achievement standards

Candidates will be required to name and provide details of the drama / theatre form or the live performance.

Candidates may be required to respond in any combination of written response and illustration (sketches and / or diagrams).

Diagrams or sketches will be assessed on the quality of information conveyed and not their artistic merit (i.e. simple stick figures are satisfactory). Candidates should annotate their diagrams or sketches to provide specific detail and to explain their answers.

Special assessment conditions

Refer to the NZQA website for further information:

[Aromatawai special assessment conditions](#)

Specific information for individual achievement standards

Standard:	91514
Domain:	Drama Studies
Title:	Interpret a text from a prescribed playwright to demonstrate knowledge of a theatre form or period
Version:	4
Number of credits:	4

The format of questions for this standard will be similar to those in previous years.

Candidates will be expected to make connections between the text studied and its theatre form or period.

Candidates should be familiar with features of the form, which may include performance space, acting style, themes and ideas, use of conventions and technologies, and the historical and social context of the theatre form or period.

Questions may cover a combination of features of the theatre form or period.

Prescribed playwrights

The chosen text **MUST** be written by one of the playwrights listed below. Appropriate texts include, but are not limited to, those suggested. The text studied must enable in-depth exploration of the features of the theatre form or period.

Playwrights	Suggested texts
Jean Anouilh	<i>The Lark, Antigone</i>
Aristophanes	<i>The Frogs, Lysistrata</i>
Samuel Beckett	<i>Waiting for Godot, Endgame</i>
Albert Belz	<i>Yours Truly, Raising the Titanics</i>
Jean Betts	<i>Revenge of the Amazons, Ophelia Thinks Harder</i>
William Brandt	<i>Verbatim</i>
Bertolt Brecht	<i>Mother Courage and Her Children, The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i>
Lynda Chanwai-Earle	<i>Foh Sarn, Ka Shue</i>
Anton Chekhov	<i>The Cherry Orchard, The Three Sisters</i>
Caryl Churchill	<i>Top Girls, Softcops</i>
Euripides	<i>The Trojan Women, Medea</i>
Michellanne Forster	<i>Daughters of Heaven</i>
Toa Fraser	<i>Bare, Pure and Deep</i>
Dianna Fuemanna	<i>Falemalama</i>
Federico García Lorca	<i>The House of Bernarda Alba, Blood Wedding</i>

Briar Grace-Smith	<i>Purapurawhetū, When Sun and Moon Collide</i>
Gary Henderson	<i>Peninsula, An Unseasonable Fall of Snow</i>
Witi Ihimaera	<i>Woman Far Walking</i>
Oscar Kightley and Dave Armstrong	<i>Niu Sila, Fresh off the Boat</i>
John Kneubuhl	<i>Think of a Garden</i>
Hone Kouka	<i>The Prophet, Waioara, Home Fires</i>
Greg McGee	<i>Foreskin's Lament</i>
Stuart McKenzie	<i>Transmission</i>
Vela Manusaute	<i>Taro King, My Name is Pilitome</i>
Bruce Mason	<i>The End of the Golden Weather, The Pōhutukawa Tree</i>
Arthur Miller	<i>The Crucible, Playing for Time</i>
Vincent O'Sullivan	<i>Shuriken</i>
Harold Pinter	<i>The Birthday Party, The Hothouse</i>
Jacob Rajan and Justin Lewis	<i>Krishnan's Dairy, The Pickle King</i>
Renée	<i>Wednesday to Come, Pass it On</i>
Maurice Shadbolt	<i>Once on Chunuk Bair</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>Twelfth Night, Macbeth</i>
George Bernard Shaw	<i>Saint Joan, Arms and the Man</i>
Stephen Sinclair	<i>The Bellbird, The Bach</i>
Sophocles	<i>Antigone, Oedipus Rex</i>
Tom Stoppard	<i>Travesties, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead</i>
Mervyn Thompson	<i>Children of the Poor, Coaltown Blues</i>
Makerita Urale	<i>Frangipani Perfume</i>
Timberlake Wertenbaker	<i>Our Country's Good, The Love of the Nightingale</i>
Oscar Wilde	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest, Lady Windermere's Fan</i>
Tennessee Williams	<i>The Glass Menagerie, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i>

Standard:	91518
Domain:	Drama Studies
Title:	Demonstrate understanding of live drama performance
Version:	3
Number of credits:	4

The format of questions for this standard will be similar to those in previous years.

Candidates will be required to respond to questions on a drama performance they have viewed as a member of the audience in the 2026 calendar year. This may include watching a live drama performance that has been recorded with, or intended for, a live audience. Any viewed performances, whether live or recorded, should provide opportunities for candidates to meet the requirement of the standard at all grade levels.

Candidates will be expected to make connections between the director / designer's concept(s) and the performance seen.

Candidates should be familiar with the use of drama components: elements, techniques, conventions, and technologies.

For the purposes of this assessment, 'conventions' refers to strategies that are established to make meaning; and 'wider context', as required by the criterion for Achievement with Excellence, could refer to:

- the performance as a whole
- the playwright's purpose
- the nature and/or purpose of theatre as an art form
- the social or historical context.

Questions may cover a combination of drama components.