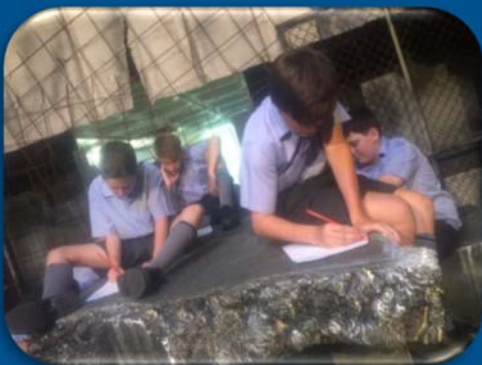




BRISBANE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# Superheroes & Villains

## A Melodrama Unit



# Melodrama

## Unit 1: Year 8

### Dramatic Languages

Forms and or Styles	Melodrama Soap Opera
<b>Unit Focus</b>	Over the course of this unit, students will explore the dramatic techniques of Melodrama. Key dramatic concepts of the style such as; stock characters (particularly Heroes and Villains), the dramatic conventions and Principles of Narrative will be explored through practical workshops. Students will devise, present and critique dramatic works in the style of Melodrama. After achieving a replication of style, students will be challenged to apply the key concepts to new contexts (eg. Horrible histories, comic books, soap opera, etc) with the penultimate goal of subverting the style, using dramatic devices such as parody, spoof and satire.
<b>Purpose</b> Viewpoints (ACARA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>to entertain</li></ul>
<b>Aesthetic Context</b>	<b>Villain Reintegration Program</b>
<b>Principles of Narrative (Story)</b>	3 P's (Provocation, Pangs, Penalty)
<b>Elements of Drama</b>	Role/ character Relationship Situation Focus Voice Movement Dramatic tension Time Mood & atmosphere Audience Language, ideas & dramatic action
<b>Skills of Drama</b>	Devising Applying stagecraft Working as an ensemble

	<p><b>Acting Skills:</b> voice (projection, articulation, pace, modulation), movement (movement appropriate to character, movement to develop mood and tension)</p> <p><b>Stagecraft:</b> facing the audience and not masking</p> <p><b>Ensemble Skills:</b> listening, turn taking, leadership, brainstorming, sharing and collaborating</p> <p><b>Playbuilding Skills:</b> experimentation, trialling and evaluating dramatic action</p> <p><b>Rehearsal Skills:</b> autonomous rehearsal, committing lines to memory, engaging body memory, refining, accepting direction and polishing dramatic action</p> <p><b>Critique Skills:</b> evaluation, justification, praise and constructive criticism</p> <p><b>Audience Skills:</b> listening, observing and performance etiquette</p>
<b>Conventions of Forms and Styles</b>	<p>Conventions of Melodrama</p> <p>Stock Characters (hero, villain, damsel in distress, land lord, side kick, etc.)</p> <p>Status and power relationships</p> <p>Melodramatic tension</p> <p>Formulaic Principles of Narrative</p> <p>3 P's (Provocation, Pangs, Penalty)</p> <p>Underscore tension with sound/music</p> <p>Character theme music/sound effect</p> <p>Good vs. Evil (moral struggle) themes and archetypes (inc. costuming)</p> <p>Audience interaction</p> <p>Aside</p> <p>Direct address</p> <p>Monologue</p> <p>Gestus</p> <p>Exaggeration</p> <p>Parody</p> <p>Satire</p>
<b>ACARA Content Descriptions</b>	<p><b>8.1</b> Combine the elements of drama in devised and scripted drama to explore and develop issues, ideas and themes</p> <p><b>8.2</b> Develop roles and characters consistent with situation, dramatic forms and performance styles to convey status, relationships and intentions</p> <p><b>8.3</b> Plan, structure and rehearse drama, exploring ways to communicate and refine dramatic meaning for theatrical effect</p> <p><b>8.4</b> Develop and refine expressive skills in voice and movement to communicate ideas and dramatic action in different performance styles and conventions, including contemporary Australian drama styles developed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dramatists</p>

	<p><b>8.5</b> Perform devised and scripted drama maintaining commitment to role</p> <p><b>8.6</b> Analyse how the elements of drama have been combined in devised and scripted drama to convey different forms, performance styles and dramatic meaning</p>
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<p><b>Making: Forming (Create your own villain)</b></p> <p>Students will develop a portfolio of stock characters within the style of Melodrama and devise a duologue for a villain, his accomplice and archenemy.</p> <p><b>Conditions:</b>  Individual  Length: 1min -1min 30sec (written practical)  Preparation: 2 weeks  Stimulus: Teacher provided stimulus (melodrama scenarios)</p> <p><b>Responding: Analytical Response to live theatre</b>  After viewing excerpts from, <i>Into the Woods</i>, directed by Timothy Sheader, students are to analyse some of the key moments within the footage they have viewed. Their response will analyse specific skills of drama from one excerpt only.</p> <p><b>Conditions:</b>  Individual written review  Completed under exam conditions  Length: 350-500 words  Preparation: x3 lessons of working time  Stimulus: <i>Into the Woods</i> directed by Timothy Sheader</p> <p><b>Making: Presenting</b>  The most evil villain of all time (and his trusty henchman) has targeted your local community. A hero and his brave best friend have decided to stop them before it's too late!</p> <p>In groups of 3-5, and using knowledge of the melodramatic style, students must present, in character, a 4-5 minute scenario detailing the above conflict, to a visiting audience. The notion that the villain has failed, yet will try again to defeat the hero must also be communicated to the audience.</p> <p><b>Conditions</b>  Groups of 3-5 students  Length: 1 min per student (<i>3 to 5 min</i>)  Preparation: 4 weeks  Devised Performance</p>



# SUPERHEROES & VILLAINS: A MELODRAMA UNIT

## 2016 DQ State Conference

### **WARM-UP: *Superhero Mastermind*** (Slide 7)

Teacher models 3 actions and sounds for the following contemporary melodramatic stock characters: Super Hero, Super Villain & Victim.

Using a countdown from 3 to 1, the teacher leads the game by executing one of the three actions w. sound after every countdown. **Any student who executes the same action & sound** as the teacher is eliminated. Continue until there is only one participant remaining, who wins the round.

### **CONTEXT BUILDING**

#### **WARM-UP: *How many villains and superheroes can you name?*** (Slide 8)

In teams of 4-6, students are to move to the scorecards. Each team is given a set time limit (60 or 90 seconds) during which they will record as many villains and superheroes as they can.

*\*\* This is a good segue into discussing recognisable heroes and villains and brainstorming the traits of the respective stock characters.*

### **ROLE BUILDING**

#### ***Villain Registry and Induction*** (Slide 9)

Individually, invite students to collect a villain registration form and pen. Students are to create an original villain and complete the profile, ready for registration.

### **CONTEXT BUILDING**

#### ***Villain Reintegration Program*** (Slide 10)

Teacher-in-role contextualises program and invites villains to submit their registration form and complete a name tag. By fixing the label to their clothes, students are “stepping into role” as their villain. They then leave the room and await their entrance for the program.

### **ROLE BUILDING**

#### ***Villains Anonymous*** (Slide 11)

Villains are greeted at the door by Teacher-in-Role as facilitator of the Reintegration Program.

They take their place in a circle and one by one, introduce themselves and confess their villainous past. For example:

Student 1: Hi, my name is Dr Evil.

ALL: Hi, Dr Evil.

Student 1: I've been a villain for 8 years now. In the past I used to steal women's shoes and remove all of the heels.

Student 2: Hi, my name is The Exterminator.

### **CONTEXT BUILDING**

#### ***Villain Reintegration Program Goals & program*** (Slides 12-13)

Teacher-in-Role introduces the intention of the program – to convert yesterday's villains in to tomorrow's heroes.

The “steps” are discussed, however, during the final stages of the brief, the facilitator is interrupted by an incoming transmission.

## INJECTING TENSION

### *Dr Claw Cometh...* (Slide 14)

An incoming audio transmission from Dr Claw reveals his evil plot to tempt the villains in the program to revert to their villainous ways. Teacher-in-Role responds (approx. 35-42 seconds) in alarm, claiming that the villains have committed to reform & are signed up to reintegrate into society as heroes. Claw reacts at 42 seconds, determined to make the newly reformed villains pay for their decision to abandon their lives of evil doing.

## NARRATIVE BUILDING

### *Dr Claw's To-Do List* (Slide 15)

Teacher-in-Role talks students through Dr Claw's action plan for taking over the world.

## NARRATIVE BUILDING

### *Micro Forming Task: Superhero Response & Introduction of Dramatic Frames* (Slides 16-17)

Teacher introduces the three dramatic frames of Melodrama narrative:

Provocation, Pangs and Penalty.

Each dramatic frame is applied to the plot structure of a Melodrama, aligning with the beginning, middle and end of the narrative sequence. In groups, students are to devise a three scene narrative focussing on one frame per scene.

Explain the following Melodramatic conventions for students to include:

- Aside
- Catchphrase
- Direct address
- Placards

Give students guidance re: acting style:

Heightened vocal and physical characterisation

Construction of roles, relationships & situations as per stock character traits

**Use Slide 18 as a performance backdrop.**

## REFLECTIVE ACTION

### *Taking Sides* (Slide 19)

In this convention, students are invited to make a decision in role. They will either continue with the process of reformation to accept a new life as a superhero or succumb to temptation and regress to their villainous ways.

Would-be superheroes and reverting super villains are asked to separate into two sides of the space.

Teacher-in-role as facilitator of the program uses touch 'n' talk to invite each villain to voice their reason for choosing heroism or villainy.

# Superheroes and Villains: A Melodrama unit

Presented by  
Rachel Trolan and Ben Newth  
BRISBANE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## The BGS context

- An academic culture that advocates the multiple benefits of an arts-rich education.
- The Department seeks to create and implement teaching and learning that fosters creative, innovative and challenging artistic practice.
- Drama programs are facilitated from Years 5 – 12.
- Years 5-9 are on a semester rotation (twice a week).
- Year 10 is the first elective year.
  - 150 boys elected to Year 10 Drama in 2016.
- 4 x Senior Drama classes.





## The Aesthetic Context Villain Reintegration program

**Dramatic Conventions** - Stock Characters, Status and power relationships, Melodramatic tension, Formulating Principles of Narrative, Underscore tension with sound (craft, Ensemble and Critiquing Skills).  
Character theme music (sound effect, sound (struggle) themes and arch interaction, Aside, Direct address, Exaggeration, Parody and Satire.

**Narrative Principles** - 3 P's (Plot, Character, Point of View) and Evaluative written response to

**Elements of Drama** - Situation, Focus, Voice, Movement, Dramatic tension, Mood and atmosphere, Audience, Language, ideas and dramatic action.

### WHY?

- ALIGNS WELL TO MELODRAMATIC STYLE (stock characters etc)
- APPEALING AND ENGAGING TO OUR STUDENTS

## Overview of Workshop

### Key learning experiences:

- Warmups
- How to establish context within the classroom
- Ways to inject tension
- Narrative focused micro forming task
- Reflective activity



## ~~TRADITIONAL~~ CONTEMPORARY Melodramatic Stock Characters



**SUPER  
HERO**



**SUPER  
VILLAIN**



~~SUPER VICTIM~~  
**DANSEL**

## CONTEMPORARY Melodramatic Stock Characters

High  
Status

HERO



VILLAIN



Medium  
Status

SIDEKICK



HENCHMAN

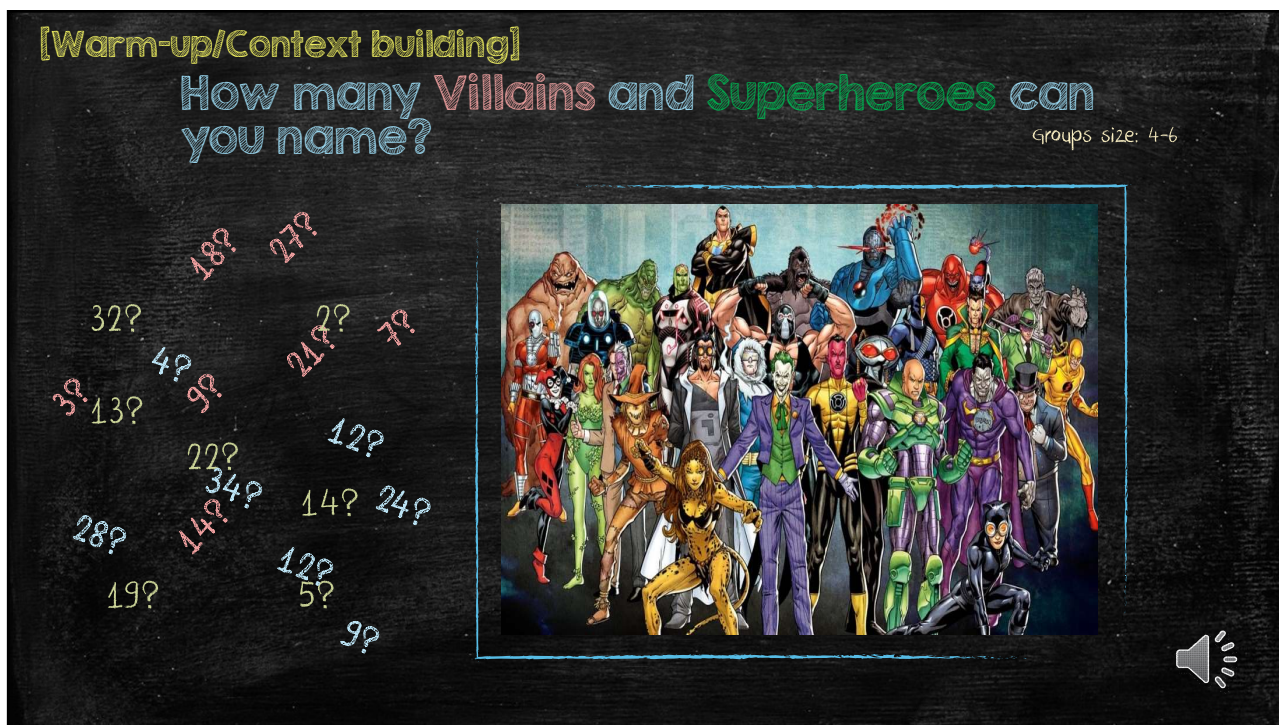


Low  
Status

VICTIM









[Role Building]

## Villain Registry & Induction:



Individually, you are required to submit an application for Villains Anonymous.

[Context Building]



## Villain Reintegration Program

Former ZEROS

Future HEROES

## [Role Building]

### Villains Anonymous



All villains will enter the room and sit in a circle.

In turn Super-villains will introduce themselves and confess their evil past.



For Example:

Hi, I'm \_\_\_\_\_.

Hi, \_\_\_\_\_.

I've been villain free for \_\_\_\_\_ years now. In the past I used to \_\_\_\_\_.

## [Context Building]

**Our Goals:** To develop the Heroes of tomorrow



PAST YOU



FUTURE YOU



## [Context Building]

### 3 step program:

How to level up



- ☐ ~~Admit to villainous past and commit to heroism.~~ ✓
- ☐ Exhibit team skills in high pressure environments.
- ☐ Foster Heroic traits/attributes:
  - Courage
  - Common Sense and instinct
  - The ability to commit selfless acts
  - Knowledge of Self defense



## [Injecting Tension]



## [Narrative Building]

### Dr Claw's To-do List:



8:15am

Disable google from the internet.



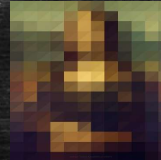
8:32am

Make everyone's ringtone Justin Biebers 'What do you mean'.



8:40am

Remove all Zippers from the front of trousers and sew them onto the back.



8:47am

Make all photos pixelated.



8:50am

Fiddle with shopping trolleys so they can only turn left.



2:01pm

Pilates.



## [Narrative Building]

### Superhero Response: FORMING TASK

3 scenes  
Groups size: 5-6

DRAMATIC FRAME: 3Ps



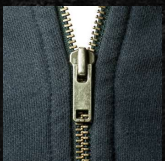
#### Provocation

Is whatever provokes the villain to do EVIL to the hero



#### Pangs

Are the pains that the hero suffers through because of the villain's evil



#### Penalty

Is the last part of the narrative where the villain gets the punishment he deserves



**EACH** scene must have an **ASIDE**



[Narrative Building]

## Superhero Response: PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

3 scenes  
Groups size: 5-6

### COMPOSITION INGREDIENTS

- Asides (1 per scene)
- Catchphrase
- Direct address
- Heightened Characters
- Stock Characters
- Placards



Transitions may utilise: Freeze frame, soundscape etc.





# Villain Reintegration Program Application



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Power/s or Special Ability



Why did you become a villain?

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---

Who is your Arch Nemesis?

---

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\*By signing this document you acknowledge that you have read the terms and conditions of Villains Anonymous and will commit to the program and denounce your villainous past.

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## **VOICEOVER 1**

*(Phone ringing SFX)*

DR. CLAW: Is this thing even on. Hello.. hello. They are gonna think im an idiot.

*(DR. CLAW clears throat)*

Attention my villainy friends, Dr. Claw here. You might know me from such atrocities as starting the war in the middle east and spreading Ebola around the world. Well do I have some news for you. I have set up 5 acts to simultaneously wreak havoc across the globe. Join me friends, as we join this world together.

T.I.R\*: We will never join you Dr. Claw, we are reformed villains now!

DR. CLAW: *(laugh)* Reformed villains. You make me sick. Very well, Heroes to be, you have made your grave. Get ready to sleep in it.

*(Pressing phone numbers SFX)*

*(aside)* hang up you blasted thing. Never works when you want it too. I knew I shouldn't have got the cheap one. How can you expect anyone to take you seriously?

*(Hang up SFX)*

\*T.I.R = Teacher in Role

## **VOICEOVER 2**

DR. CLAW: Argh, heroes to be. It seems you have come to a crossroad. It is time to decide. Do you want to continue to fight crime, wear ridiculous costumes and perform with cheesy smiles –

*(aside)* errr Heroes, they disgust me.

OR, are you more aligned to a life of living in the shadows, wealth & literally stealing candy from babies.

*(aside)* Argh, to be a Villain, such a thrill!

Superhero or Supervillain.

You must make your decision now.



How many VILLAINS and SUPERHEROES  
can you name?

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.
7.	8.
9.	10.
11.	12.
13.	14.
15.	16.
17.	18.
19.	20.
21.	22.
23.	24.
25.	26.
27.	28.
29.	30.
31.	32.
33.	34.
35.	36.





**VILLAIN  
FREE  
ZONE**

Nobody is a  
**villain** in their  
own eyes.




A detailed illustration of the character Deadpool, shown from the waist up in profile, facing right. He is wearing his iconic red and black suit, which includes a mask with white eye lenses. He is holding two silver swords, one in each hand, with the blades crossed. The background is solid black.

Former ZERO

Future HERO

A hero is someone  
who understands the  
responsibility that  
comes with their  
freedom



A dramatic low-angle shot of Spider-Man hanging from a single web strand. He is positioned in the center-left of the frame, looking directly at the viewer. His red and blue suit is detailed with the classic spider emblem. The background features a large, bright full moon in a dark, cloudy sky. Below, the silhouettes of city buildings are visible, some with lights glowing. Several birds are seen in flight around Spider-Man. The overall mood is heroic and cinematic.

A hero is someone who  
knows how to hang on  
just one minute longer



A dramatic, low-key photograph featuring the silhouette of a villainous character, possibly a superhero with a cape, standing against a turbulent, orange and yellow cloudy sky. The character is positioned on the right side of the frame, looking down. The overall mood is dark and intense.

~~Black-hearted evil~~

Brave-hearted Hero

The background of the slide features a blue gradient with the silhouettes of the Justice League members. From left to right, the characters are: Aquaman holding a trident, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman with her lasso, Superman, Batman, The Flash, and Cyborg. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

A hero is someone who is  
supported by a strong team