

**CARnAGE**  
**A play by Neil Coulson**  
**Transport Accident Commission**

**Exploring road safety and public health: Part One**

PROLOGUE

Question 1

The play opens with the Prologue, as follows: *A WHEELCHAIR is sitting at the back of the stage. None of the cast references it, or notices it throughout a majority of the play.*

- a) Why do you think the playwright opened with the prologue?
- b) How does this create the mood for the rest of the play?
- c) How does the contrast between the wheelchair and the birthday celebrations make you feel as an audience member?

Question 2

The play features a series of 'blackouts' that are designed to capture the key messages of the writer.

- a) Explain the elements of road trauma that are depicted in the news reports.
- b) Collect TWO news reports depicting the consequences of road trauma. These could be written or audio-visual format.
- c) In what ways do the reports that you have collected reflect the messages being given in the play?

PARTY PREPERATION

Question 3

- a) Thinking of your own family, how typical is this conversation between Ashlee and her mum, Karen?
- b) Thinking of Karen's question, "Now you haven't invited anyone you don't know have you? I don't want this becoming another one of those *FaceSpace Parties*", what problems may arise if people don't carefully manage this aspect of a party?

TWO MATES

Question 4

This conversation between Devon and Sam highlights some potential for risk-taking. What possible risks do you see in the following comments made by Sam?

- a) Nah, Dad's on night shift. I have the car tomorrow night; I'm so responsible!
- b) "Besides I am already taking Tess, you two can share the back seat!"

Question 5

Research peer passenger laws in Victoria by visiting the Vicroads website and undertaking a search.

- a) What are the laws in Victoria relating to P-plate drivers?
- b) Give TWO reasons why these laws were introduced.

#### Question 6

Watch the MAFMAD short film, 'Death Blooms':

[www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2008/death-blooms](http://www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2008/death-blooms)

- a) What happens when the phone rings in the car?
- b) How does Ben encourage Harry to take risks?
- c) In what ways does the creator of the film, Matt Goodrich, use sound effects to add to the mood and message of the film?
- d) How would you describe the three characters in this film: Harry, Jess and Ben?
- e) In what ways does Jess save Harry and Ben from danger?

#### TRIPLE-0 CALL

##### Question 7

How does the playwright establish tension in this scene? Take quotes from the play to illustrate.

#### CLASSROOM (ONE)

##### Question 8

To answer these questions, research road toll statistics involving young people by visiting the TAC's website at [www.tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety](http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety) and clicking on 'statistics'.

- a) What is the change in the road toll in the current year as compared to the same time in the previous year?
- b) What percentage of road deaths have been male and female over that time?
- c) What are the statistics for drivers, passengers and pedestrians over the past 12 months?
- d) There has been a trend in statistics, which shows that there were fewer passenger deaths on Victorian roads in 2011 and 2012 compared to previous years. Suggest TWO reasons for this.
- e) When riding in a car as a passenger, have you ever felt afraid that an accident may occur? What aspects of the driver's behaviour made you feel afraid? Did you take steps to encourage the driver to slow down? Explain your response.
- f) In percentage terms, what changes have occurred in metropolitan and rural road deaths? What dangers may occur on country roads that are less likely to exist on metropolitan roads?
- g) Which age groups are at the greatest on Victorian roads? Suggest THREE reasons for this.

### Question 9

The teacher, Julia, asks questions to her class that invite responses on attitudes to young people and driving. Imagine that your class is the group in this play. Discuss the questions that Julia puts to her students.

- a) How many of you have your licence or *learners*?
- b) How many of you think L and P-platers are unfairly victimised by Police?
- c) How many think too much emphasis is put on young drivers?
- d) Why do you think that is?

### FIRST RESPONSE PRE-CALLOUT

#### Question 10

- a) What is Dean's attitude to his work as a paramedic?
- b) Give reasons why he regards humour as being so important to survive in the work that he does?

#### Question 11

Have you ever thought about the impact of road trauma on people who work in emergency services, as well as doctors? Watch the TAC's first road safety campaign, entitled 'Girlfriend'.

- a) Describe the work of emergency service professionals in this film.
- b) What mood has the director created?
- c) What impact may this type of work have on those involved, such as paramedics, nurses and doctors?

### BIRTHDAY SEQUENCE

#### Question 12

The playwright describes the scene as, *Typical party set up. Guys & Girls on opposite sides of the stage. Lots of awkward silence. Failed attempts to interact. Guys can be sneaking drinks that COREY has brought, trying to impress girls.*

Is this typical of parties that you have attended? Explain

#### Question 13

- a) What type of friendship does Sam and Devon share? Is it a positive relationship?
- b) Thinking of the comment, "Sam, you in or you out? Emma, Travis and Michael are coming, one seat left", how would you describe Corey as a character? Could his attitude present a risk to others?
- c) Is Corey typical of many males? Explain

#### Question 14

Watch the *MAFMAD* film, *Swing* and answer the questions below.

<http://www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2005/swing>

- a) Why do you think the director, Sam Holst, opens the film with swings and children?
- b) What aspects of male friendship are being depicted in this film?
- c) Comment on use of time shifts in the film. Why do you think Sam Holst uses time shifts in this way?
- d) The director uses slow motion in this film. Suggest reasons for this. What effect does the use of slow motion produce in the viewer?
- e) What role does Sarah play in the collision that is to take the lives of one of the boys? Do you think that males show off in an effort to impress girls?
- f) 'I didn't even get it on with a chick, let alone get married and have kids.' What is the message of this film?

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY/CRASH

#### Question 15

This scene opens with the following stage direction: *Two chairs and wheelchair placed on one side of stage. ASHLEE, DEVON and SAM sit in chairs/wheelchairs. All partygoers on other side of stage. Singing "New Happy Birthday" Song.*

For us as an audience, what type of mood is created here? Explain your response with reference to stagecraft devices and the dialogue.

#### Question 16

Watch one of the early TAC road safety campaign entitled, *Darren - Country Kids* [www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXiyFkJMAPI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXiyFkJMAPI) and answer the following questions

- a) How does the girl initially respond to the behaviour of her male friends in the car?
- b) What dangers are shown here in driving on country roads?

### ASHLEE: FOOTPRINTS

#### Question 17

- a) Why did the playwright have the friends *fading away* before Ashlee delivers this monologue?
- b) What effect does this have on us as an audience?
- c) What hopes and dreams does Ashlee have?
- d) Why do you think the playwright inserted this monologue into the play?

### CLASSROOM (TWO)

#### Question 18

Students can act out this scene from the play.

- a) What impact does this have on your understanding of road fatalities?
- b) In terms of the factors that cause road deaths, which do you think are most likely to affect people in your age group?

## FIRST RESPONSE POST CALLOUT

### Question 19

- a) What impact does this collision have on Rebecca?
- b) What is Dean's response to Rebecca's words?
- c) What impact did Dean's first call-out as a paramedic have on him? What strategies does he use in an effort to maintain balance in his life?

## PUBLIC OPINIONS/RUMOURS

In Classical Greek drama, the Chorus was a group of actors who described and commented upon the main action of a play. The Chorus traditionally uses dance, song and recitation to highlight aspects of the drama.

### Question 20

- a) How is the Chorus used here? In what ways does the Chorus emphasise the messages of the playwright?
- b) Choose TWO of the statements that have an impact on you as a viewer. Explain why you chose those statements.

## PARENT'S WORST PHONE CALL

### Question 21

- a) Why do you think the playwright opened this scene with *KAREN enters and stands on the other side of the stage, addressing the group, starting the monologue as a eulogy?*
- b) Is this more effective for you as a viewer than having the scene at a funeral service?

### Question 22

Go to the web link of the TAC road safety campaign, *Pictures of You*, [www.picturesofyou.com.au/](http://www.picturesofyou.com.au/) and complete the following tasks:

- a) Watch the full film where families are depicted holding photos of loved ones (click on the link, 'watch commercial').
- b) Do you find this film more effective than other TAC campaigns that have used actors? Give reasons.
- c) Choose one of the stories that are featured on the website (Trevor, Craig, Ryan and Alisha). Briefly outline the circumstances of the death of the person whose family members are in the link. What impact has this story had upon you as a viewer?

## DEVON: APPLE CRUMBLE

### Question 23

In this monologue, Devon says, "*Before this, there was nothing I thought that was impossible. I wasn't reckless, I didn't tempt fate, but it was the youthful immortality of Icarus that fuelled me. And so now, I am this.*"

- a) What does Devon mean by the phrase, 'the youthful immortality of Icarus'?

- b) Do you think that this is typical of many young males when they are around motor vehicles? Give reasons.

#### Question 24

Watch the *MAFMAD* film, *The Price of Friendship*, and answer the questions below:  
[www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2007/the-price-of-friendship](http://www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2007/the-price-of-friendship)

- What is the attitude of the young driver to owning this car? How does he respond to the comment that he will be a 'speeding weapon'?
- What role does the car salesman play in the sales process?
- How do the 'uni mates' and the driver's girlfriend respond to the purchase of the car?
- Why doesn't the remark, "You're gonna regret this/ More than you know" discourage the driver?

#### TWO MATES (PART 2) & CLICHÉ CHOIR

#### Question 25

- What impact does the death of Ashlee have on Devon?
- How does Devon respond to the words of comfort that are spoken to him?
- How does the playwright indicate to us that Sam has passed away? Do you find this effective?

#### Question 26

Watch three films from the *MAFMAD* series:

- *Anything?* [www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2003/anything](http://www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2003/anything)
  - *Denial* [www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2005/denial](http://www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2005/denial)
  - *What's on your mind?* [www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2010/whats-on-your-mind](http://www.mafmad.com.au/past-winners/2010/whats-on-your-mind)
- What is the message of the three films?
  - Which film did you find the most effective? Why?

#### FIRST RESPONSE: WHEN IT'S SOMEONE YOU KNOW & CLASSROOM (THREE)

#### Question 27

- What impact has the loss of Ashlee and Sam had on others?
- Do you think that when young people start driving, they are aware of how much their death or injury would affect others?

#### Question 28

Watch the TAC road safety campaign, *Haunted*

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s033MjVR7o&feature=c4-overview-ol&list=PLAC0ACB98400EAF8E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s033MjVR7o&feature=c4-overview-ol&list=PLAC0ACB98400EAF8E)

- Referring to key stages in his life, what impact does the death of the child have on the main character?
- What was his blood alcohol concentration at the time of the collision?

c) What is the TAC's message in this campaign?

### **Creative task: Part Two**

*This task can be completed individually or in groups.*

Your task is to present a road safety message that is designed to encourage respect for road use among young people in your age group. Your message should also focus on harm minimisation in general. You can use one of the following forms:

- Webpage.
- Television or radio interview with a person who is involved in road trauma such as a police officer or a paramedic. For this task, one student in the group could play the role of the interviewer while another student adopts the persona of a professional involved in road trauma.
- Create a short film in the style of a TAC road safety campaign (30 to 60 seconds)
- The development of a script, complete with dialogue and cinematic devices, in the style of a *MAFMAD* film.
- A one-act play complete with dialogue and stagecraft elements (see *CARNAGE* as an example of how a play is written into scenes).
- A monologue as a person who has been involved in road trauma.
- A piece of artwork addressing the given theme.

### Design brief (300 to 400 words)

Before commencing your creative task, each student or group is to submit a design brief to the teacher. This design brief is to contain responses to the following questions:

- a) Which form have you chosen?
- b) Why did you choose that form?
- c) What particular aspect of road safety and public health do you intend to focus on?
- d) What message do you intend to communicate regarding road safety and public health?
- e) What strategies do you intend to use to effectively communicate your message? For example, do you intend to use humour, emotion, fear, shock tactics, evidence such as data and references to expert opinion?
- f) Who is your target audience?