

VCE

THEATRE

STUDIES

BREAK OF DAY

BY STEVE RODGERS

PROMPT PACK A

MALTHOUSE EDUCATION

MALTHOUSE THEATRE
ACKNOWLEDGES THE
UNCEDDED LANDS OF
THE KULIN NATION.
WE ACKNOWLEDGE
THEIR SOVEREIGNTY
AND THEIR SONGLINES.
WE PAY RESPECT TO
THEIR ELDERS AND THEIR
CHILDREN. WE EMBRACE
AND CELEBRATE THE
OLDEST CULTURE IN
THE WORLD.

WELCOME	2
WARNINGS AND SUPPORT	3
CONTEXTS	4
TIME	6
PLACE	10
SOCIETY, POLITICS & CULTURE	16
LANGUAGE	21
THEATRE STYLES	25
THEMES	28
MODERN LABOUR	30
CLASS & WORTH	33
HOPE & ESCAPE	34
CARE & SACRIFICE	37
GENDER, POWER & VIOLENCE	38
THE PRODUCTION	40
RESOURCES	48

MALTHOUSE THEATRE PRESENTS *BREAK OF DAY*.

© Copyright 2026 Malthouse Theatre

COVER IMAGE / Sulaiman Enayatzada (Lazy Fair)
PHOTOGRAPHY / Ryan Braxton, J.P. Valery, Shayan Rostami, Josh Chiodo, Max Bottinger-Gup, This Guy, Harvey Abayasiri, Evan Bollag, Lab Kelpie, Alexander Grey, Anosh Ahmed, East Riding Archives, Library of Congress, Rex Roberts, Etienne Girardet, Jonathan Hanna, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Harit Sharma, George Marks, Rohit Choudhari, AAP Revere Agency and Aedrian Salazar
Design / Hours After

Prompt Pack written and compiled by Lyall Brooks,
Malthouse Education Coordinator

WELCOME

Welcome to Malthouse Theatre.

This Prompt Pack A has been designed to support you and your students as they encounter *Break of Day* as a playtext, before it becomes a production on stage. Think of it as a dramaturgy pack: a place to question, explore, imagine and, of course, be provoked and prompted – hence the name!

Break of Day is a contemporary Australian play about work, family, class, care, violence, hope and the pressure of trying to imagine a different future. Set across one long night in the fictional town of Burra Creek, the play asks us to look closely at lives, places and forms of labour that are often overlooked.

Rather than offering definitive explanations or ‘answers’, this resource invites students to begin pulling dramaturgical threads. They are not expected to reach a single conclusion, but to explore ideas, justify choices and remain open to change. This mirrors the early stages of a production process, where meaning is negotiated, tested and reshaped through discussion and experimentation.

The **Contexts** chapter explores the world of the play: its time, place, society, language and theatre styles. These sections offer entry points for research, interpretation and production thinking.

Themes identifies key ideas that recur across the script, including modern labour, class and worth, hope and escape, care and sacrifice, and gender, power and violence. These themes are not separate boxes, but overlapping threads that students can track, question and connect.

The **Production** chapter then invites students to imagine how *Break of Day* might be interpreted on stage, through provocations and questions that

encourage theatrical decision-making across acting, direction, design, sound, space, style and audience experience.

Together, these chapters support students in developing dramaturgical insight and preparing for interpretive analysis. These resources are intended as inroads, not endpoints. Students will need to engage in their own discussion, research and reflection to deepen their understanding.

This Prompt Pack focuses on the playtext itself, rather than the final production.

Prompt Pack B, released during the season, will include behind-the-scenes material, production imagery, interviews and performance memory-joggers once students have seen the show and are ready to analyse and evaluate the work in performance.

Rounding out our award-winning education resources will be the digital workshop **Revisit the Play**, booked separately and released after the season, to recap and synthesise students’ knowledge and skills as they journey towards their final VCE Theatre Studies exams.

If you have any questions about this material, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with me at lbrooks@malthousetheatre.com.au.

I look forward to welcoming you and your students to the theatre.

See you there!



Lyall Brooks
Malthouse Theatre Education Coordinator

WARNINGS & SUPPORT

The script and eventual production of *Break of Day* will contain challenging content. This is listed below, with contextual information:

- frequent coarse language, appropriate for the types of characters being presented
- depictions of intimate partner violence and coercive control, presented through memories and dialogue
- predatory and misogynistic behaviour carried out by one character (Pop), explicitly condemned and ultimately called out within the play
- themes of grief, intergenerational trauma, mental health issues and addiction are addressed with care and realism
- references to underage sexual abuse are contextualised within a critique of patriarchal systems and cycles of violence
- scenes of poverty, family tension, and systemic failure provide a grounded depiction of contemporary Australian life, intended to provoke empathy and critical thinking
- partial nudity, rear only, presented in the context of care of a loved one

Malthouse Theatre is a new work company, and things can change along the journey from concept to production as scripts are redrafted, actors make discoveries, designers bring in new elements, and directors make changes right up to opening night. We update content information throughout rehearsals and publish this on our dedicated Content Warnings page on the Malthouse website, malthousetheatre.com.au/content-warnings.

You are encouraged to read any content information we provide, explore this Prompt Pack and script in advance, use your best judgement when disseminating or discussing information, get in touch if you have any questions, and make yourself and your students aware of the support offered by the organisations below.

KIDS HELPLINE

1800 55 1800

kidshelpline.com.au

BEYONDBLUE

1300 224 636

beyondblue.org.au

HEADSPACE

headspace.org.au

REACHOUT

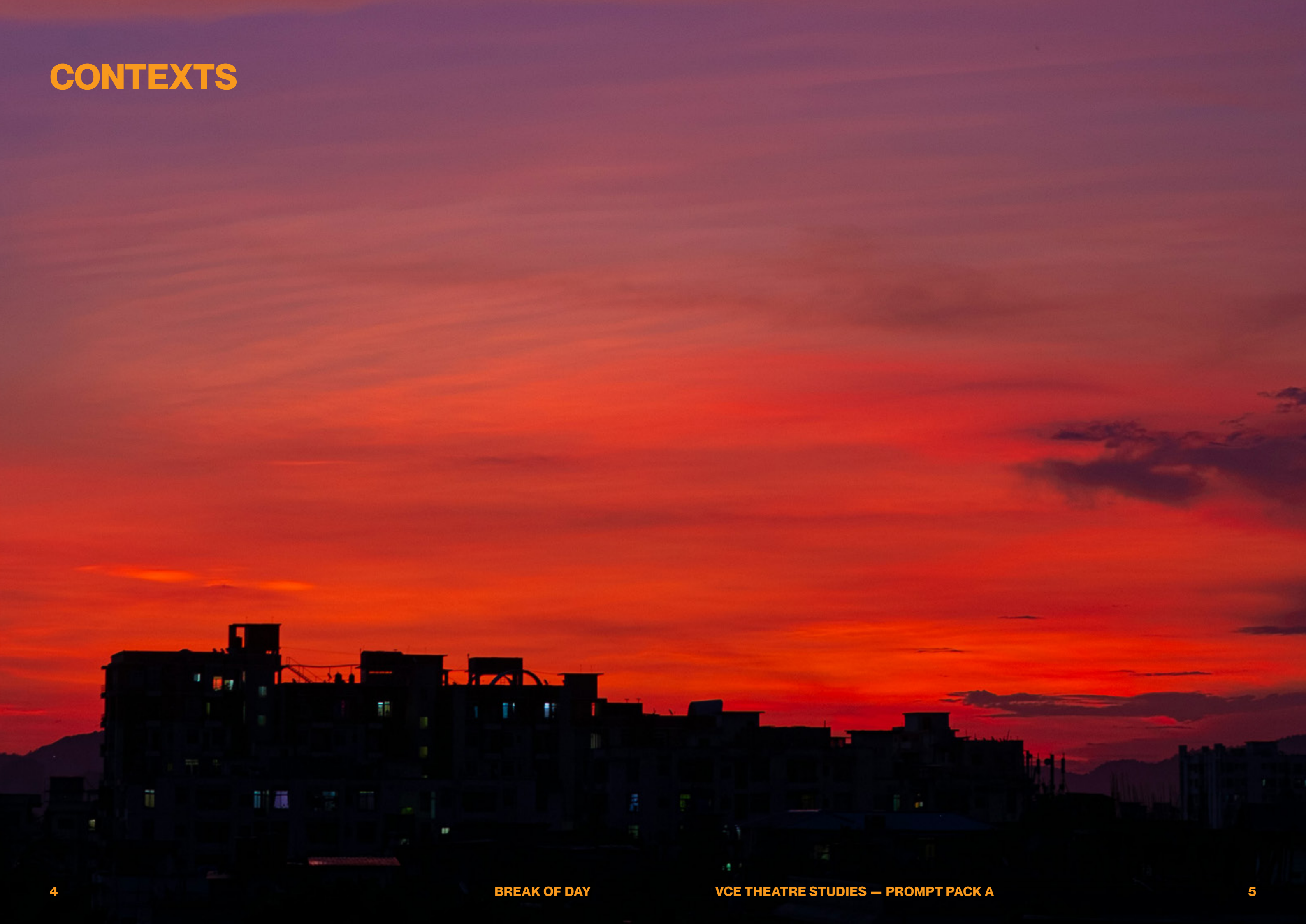
au.reachout.com

SUICIDE CALLBACK SERVICE

1300 659 467

suicidecallbackservice.org.au

CONTEXTS



TIME

The time period of *Break of Day* is contemporary Australia. The world of the play is recognisable through references to online shopping, warehouse work, automation, broken internet access, vaping, YouTube, Domino's, Cash Converters, ATAR pressure, school deadlines, casualised labour and the rising cost of housing.

Because the play is set contemporaneously with the time in which it was written, its time context gives the story immediacy. This is not a historical play looking back at working-class struggle from a safe distance. It is set in a world that students, teachers and audiences can recognise now: a world where education is often framed as a pathway out, but access to that pathway still depends on technology, money, sleep, safety and support.

A CONTEMPORARY PRESENT

The contemporary setting matters because many of the pressures in the play are not abstract or distant. Rae's future depends on a working computer, reliable internet, paid work, school support, family care and enough time to think. Pamela's life is shaped by night shift labour, warehouse targets, casual employment and the fear of becoming replaceable.

In this way, *Break of Day* reflects the social and economic conditions of its own time. It asks audiences to consider what opportunity means in a society where ambition is celebrated, but not everyone begins from the same position.

As you read, consider:

- Which details in the script make the play feel contemporary?
- What would change if this story were set 20, 40 or 60 years earlier?
- How does the play connect a young person's future to the material conditions around them?

ONE LONG NIGHT

The action of the play is tightly compressed. Much of the story unfolds across one long night, moving from evening and night shift into the early morning. Rae has an English Extension assignment due at 8am, and this deadline gives the play a strong forward drive. While Rae tries to finish her work, Pamela works through the night at The Warehouse, Pop disrupts the fragile household, and Jedediah moves between school, work and dreams of performance.

This compressed time frame increases pressure on every character. There is very little room to pause, recover or make careful decisions. Characters are tired, hungry, stressed, under-resourced and emotionally exposed. Time does not simply pass in the background; it becomes one of the forces acting on them.

As you read, consider:

- How does the 8am deadline shape the structure and tension of the play?
- What decisions are made quickly because there is no time to stop and think?
- How does exhaustion affect the characters' behaviour?
- Where does the play feel rushed, suspended or stretched?

ACTIVITY: MAPPING THE NIGHT

Working individually or in groups, create a timeline of the play from evening to morning.

You may want to mark things like:

- deadlines
- beginnings and ends of shifts (or school)
- main narrative points or actions
- characters' key emotional changes
- characters' moments of need
- consequential decisions or actions
- moments when technology fails (or becomes necessary)
- major changes in pace

Once your timeline is complete, discuss:

- Where does the play feel most pressured?
- Which character is carrying the most responsibility at each point in the night?
- How does exhaustion affect the characters' choices?
- What changes between the beginning of the night and the break of day?
- If you were directing the play, where would you want the audience to feel time speeding up or slowing down?

This activity can also be repeated after seeing the production. Compare your imagined timeline with how time was shaped through acting, direction, lighting, sound and design.

PAMELA

In the blue dark, before dawn... Every mornin' on my way home from work, I pass the Towers, and there's kids there, on the swings, playin' in the dirt. I smile, I wave. But not one of 'em ever smiles, or waves back.

SCENE 1

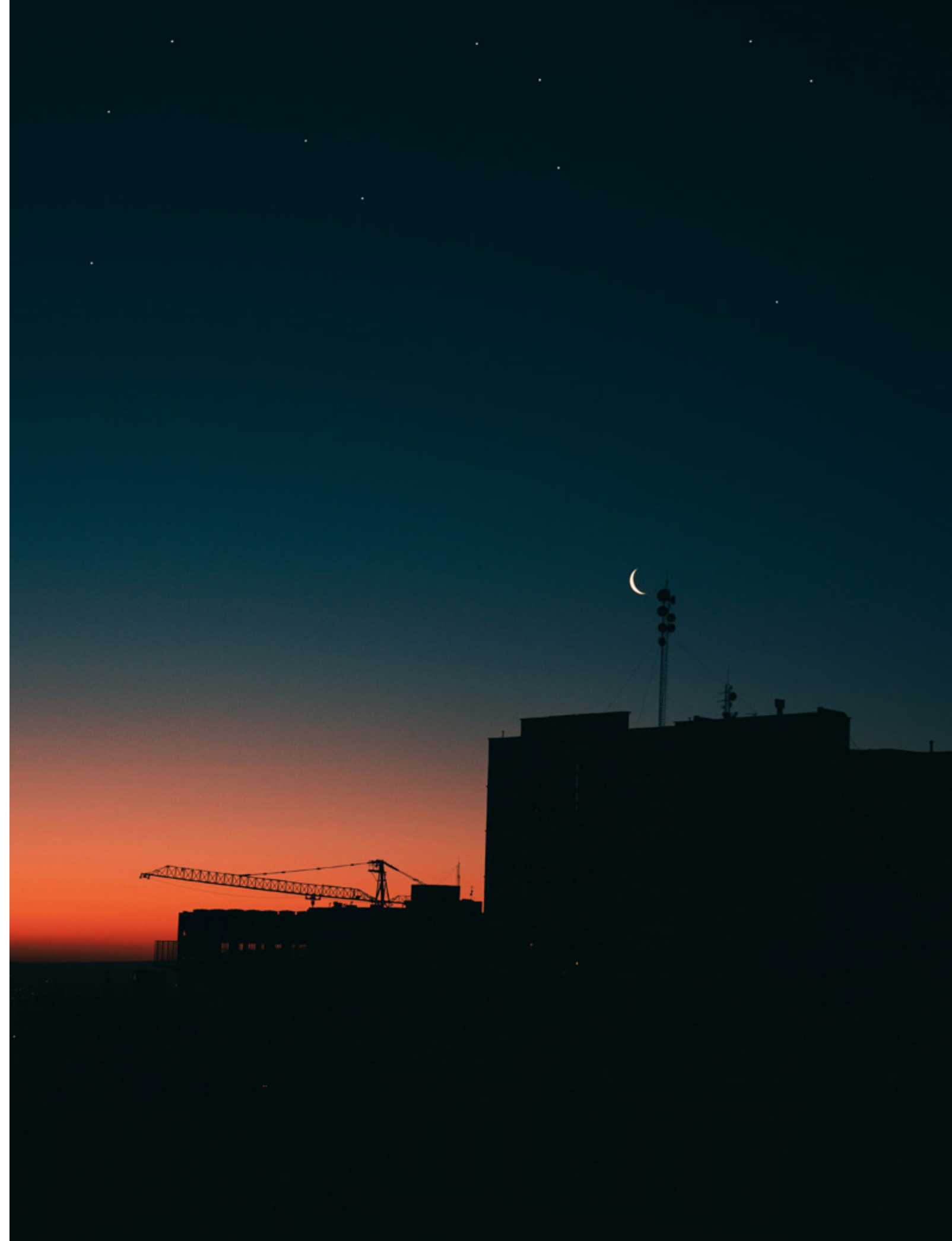
THE THRESHOLD OF MORNING

The title, *Break of Day*, suggests the literal movement from night into morning, but it also carries a sense of threshold. Dawn might suggest hope, clarity or a new beginning. However, the play complicates this. By morning, Rae has finished the assignment, but the family has also been pushed to breaking point. Pamela has lost her job, stolen a computer, and confronted the terrifying possibility of who she is beyond motherhood.

The morning does not magically repair the night. Instead, it reveals what the night has exposed: love, exhaustion, class pressure, shame, violence, care and survival. The 'break' in *Break of Day* might therefore suggest dawn, but also rupture.

As you read, consider:

- What has changed by morning?
- Does dawn bring relief, exposure, survival, collapse, or something more complicated?
- How might lighting, sound and pacing help an audience feel the movement from night into morning?
- What does Pamela see at the end of the play that she could not see at the beginning?



PLACE

Break of Day is set in the fictional town of Burra Creek. In the script, Steve Rodgers specifies that the play should reflect 'a Satellite City, or the Semi-Rural, Suburban-Fringe of a modern city.' This means Burra Creek should not feel remote, quaint or nostalgic. It is close enough to a major city to be shaped by it, but far enough away to feel overlooked by it.

In Theatre Studies, place is not only *where* a play happens. It is also *why* that location matters, and *how* it shapes character, action, meaning and interpretation.

BURRA CREEK

Burra Creek is built from recognisable contemporary Australian locations: the Plaza, The Warehouse, the Bus Interchange, the Towers, the man-made lake, the skate park, 7-Eleven, Domino's, Cash Converters, orange brick units, public bathrooms, carparks and warehouse stairwells.

These places are ordinary, but they are not neutral. They reveal how people move, work, wait, spend money, seek shelter, and try to imagine a future. Burra Creek is fictional, but it is specific enough to feel socially and geographically familiar.

As you read, consider:

- What kind of Australian town or suburb do you imagine when you read Burra Creek?
- Which details make Burra Creek feel specific rather than generic?
- How does the play avoid presenting Burra Creek as only one thing?

LEAVING & STAYING

The characters do not all experience Burra Creek in the same way. Rae describes it as 'a hole', while Jedediah sees food, op-shops, bush walks, community and possibility. Pamela wants Rae to leave because she believes the town will trap her. Jedediah wants to stay because he believes change has to begin where they are.

These different attitudes make place an active source of conflict in the play. Burra Creek is not only a backdrop. It is something the characters argue with, dream beyond, defend, resent, love and fear.

As a dramaturg, you might ask: is Burra Creek a trap, a home, a system, a community, or all of these at once?

As you read, consider:

- What does Burra Creek mean to Pamela?
- What does Burra Creek mean to Rae?
- What does Burra Creek mean to Jedediah?
- Does the play suggest that leaving is the only way to change your life?

PUBLIC & PRIVATE SPACES

The play moves between many kinds of spaces: streets, shops, a warehouse, a family unit, a bathroom, a carpark, a public toilet, a stairwell and outdoor areas around the town. These shifts allow public and private pressures to overlap. What happens at home affects work. What happens at work affects home. What happens in public still feels intimate, and what happens in private is not fully hidden.

The set note is especially important: 'The set should have no walls as such. We must be able to see into private spaces, beyond closed doors, into the bathroom.' This suggests that place in *Break of Day* may be staged fluidly rather than realistically. Home, work, street and memory might sit beside one another. Private lives may be exposed, even when characters still feel unseen.

As you read, consider:

- Which places in the play feel public, private, safe, unsafe, visible or invisible?
- How does Rae's home environment affect her ability to study?
- How does the warehouse shape Pamela's sense of herself?
- What might change if Burra Creek were staged realistically, compared with a more fluid or symbolic design?

VISIBILITY & INVISIBILITY

Pamela repeatedly describes herself as invisible. She moves through Burra Creek, The Warehouse and the 7-Eleven feeling that nobody sees her. This feeling is connected to place. The town contains many people, but not everyone is recognised as fully present or important.

The final moments of the play return to this idea. Pamela sees people, and they see her. This shift does not solve everything, but it changes the emotional meaning of place. Burra Creek becomes more than the site of exhaustion and entrapment. It becomes a place of recognition.

As you read, consider:

- Where does Pamela feel invisible?
- Who is seen in Burra Creek, and who is overlooked?
- How could staging make invisibility visible to an audience?
- By the end of the play, has Burra Creek changed, or has Pamela's relationship to it changed?

PAMELA

*I'm walkin'.
And I think. I think I'm invisible.
Down the Plaza, The Warehouse, the Bus Interchange, it doesn't matter where I am, no one
can see me.*

SCENE 1

PAMELA

*And then... When I start to feel like I'm back on the ground. I look up.
And in front of me, all around me, there's people, all these people.
I've got no idea who they are, or where they've come from.
And I look at them. All their faces.
I look at them. And they're looking at me.
And they see me.
I see them. And they see me.*

SCENE 16

ACTIVITY: TOWN PLANNING

As a class or in small groups, create a map of Burra Creek using only the locations, references and clues provided in the script.

Your map might include:

- The Warehouse
- Different characters' homes
- The Plaza
- The Bus Interchange
- The Towers
- the man-made lake
- the skate park
- 7-Eleven
- Domino's
- Cash Converters
- the school

You could even zoom in and imagine where in buildings you would find things like:

- stairwells
- Sunny's office
- public bathrooms
- the carpark

You do not need to make the map geographically 'correct'. Instead, think dramaturgically. Where do you place each location, and why?

Once you have created your map, discuss:

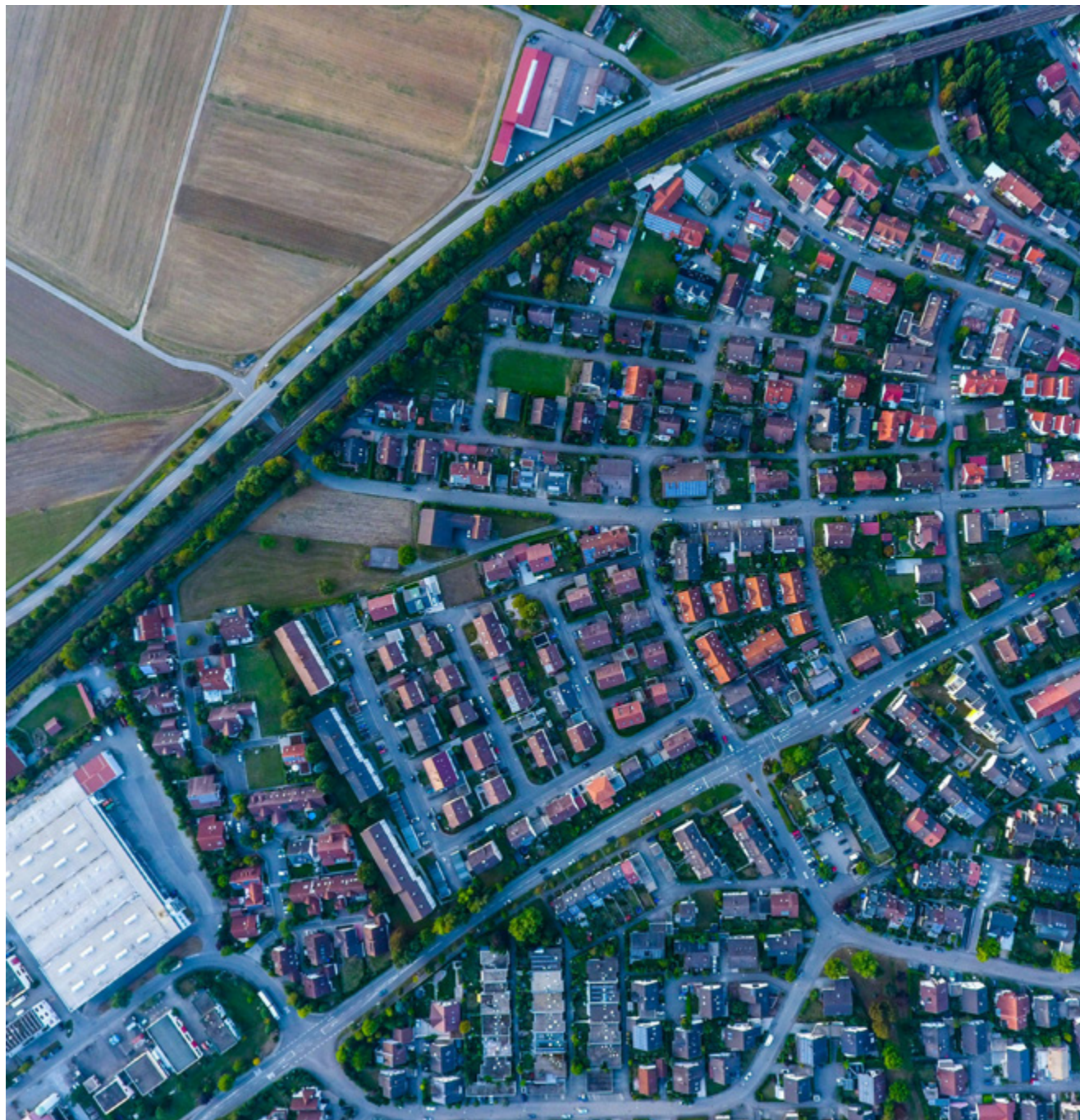
- Which places feel central to community life?
- Which places feel isolated, unsafe or overlooked?
- Where do people work, wait, study, buy food, seek shelter or pass through?
- Which places are connected by public transport, walking routes or roads?
- Which places feel visible, and which feel hidden?
- Where would Pamela feel most powerful? Where would she feel least powerful?
- Where would Rae feel trapped? Where might she feel possibility?
- Where would Jedediah feel most at home?

Now choose one route through the town, such as:

- Pamela walking to or from The Warehouse
- Rae moving between home, school and the Plaza
- Jedediah moving between work, performance and friendship
- Pop being moved through spaces where he no longer has control

Trace that route on your map. What does this journey reveal about the character's relationship to Burra Creek?

Finally, consider how this map might influence the design choices for a production. Would your staging of Burra Creek be realistic, symbolic, compressed, sprawling, dreamlike, or constantly shifting?



SOCIETY, POLITICS & CULTURE

The context of society, politics and culture refers to the conditions in which characters live: how people behave, what they value, how power operates, and what choices feel possible or impossible within the world of the play.

In *Break of Day*, these contexts are not explored through speeches about policy or formal political debate. Instead, they are felt through ordinary life: a warehouse shift, a school deadline, a broken laptop, a crowded unit, a bus interchange, a public toilet, an elderly parent who needs care, and a young person trying to imagine a future beyond the place she has come from.

The play is set in contemporary Australia, but its focus is specific. It asks audiences to look closely at working-class life on the suburban fringe, where systems of work, education, family, gender and money shape almost every decision the characters make.

CLASS, VALUE & OPPORTUNITY

Class is central to the world of *Break of Day*. The characters are not only dealing with personal problems; they are living within social and economic conditions that limit their choices. Pamela wants Rae to have a different life, but that future depends on things their family cannot easily access: time, technology, privacy, stability and money.

The play repeatedly asks how people are valued. Rae is valued by school through marks, rankings and the promise of an ATAR. Pamela is valued by The Warehouse through speed, productivity and compliance. Pop's value has changed as he has aged and become dependent. Jedediah's artistic ambition is treated by some characters as unrealistic, even though it may be one of the clearest expressions of hope in the play.

In this world, value is often measured by usefulness. Are you productive? Are you successful? Are you going somewhere? Are you able to keep up?

As you read, consider:

- How are different characters valued by the systems around them?
- Who is treated as having potential, and who is treated as disposable?
- How does class shape what characters believe they deserve?
- Does the play suggest that opportunity is equally available to everyone?

WORK & REPLACEABILITY

Pamela's job is one of the clearest social and political contexts in the play. The Warehouse is not simply a workplace. It represents a system where people are monitored, measured and expected to keep moving. While fictional, it can nevertheless be understood as a theatrical symbol of modern work and labour politics.

The Warehouse is immediately recognisable as an Amazon-style fulfilment centre: a vast online retail operation where workers pick, pack and process goods so customers can receive orders as quickly as possible. The convenience of online shopping depends on a largely invisible workforce whose bodies, time and movement are tightly managed.

Pamela works through the night while much of the town is asleep, making her feel both essential and invisible. The workplace language of targets, performance, probation and surveillance reveals a culture where workers are treated as replaceable.

She is expected to perform physically demanding labour while also managing family pressure, exhaustion and fear. When she breaks the rules, the response is not curiosity or care, but procedure.

As you read, consider:

- How does The Warehouse shape Pamela's body, language and sense of self?
- What does the play reveal about invisible labour?
- How does surveillance operate in the workplace?
- What is the difference between being seen as a worker and being seen as a person?

INVESTIGATE: THE WAREHOUSE & THE WORLD OUTSIDE THE PLAY

Read the ABC News article *What it's like to work in an Amazon Australia warehouse* by Margaret Burin (in the **RESOURCES** chapter, or easily searchable online).

The article investigates working conditions at Amazon Australia's first warehouse in Melbourne, where workers described being timed, monitored and pressured to meet demanding pick rates. Amazon disputed several of the workers' claims and stated that safety and wellbeing were a priority, but the article offers a useful real-world comparison for thinking about The Warehouse in *Break of Day*.

- As you read the article, identify details that connect to the play's depiction of warehouse work. You might focus on:
- productivity targets and pick rates
- surveillance and monitoring
- casual work and job insecurity
- physical exhaustion
- workplace language and slogans
- the gap between customer convenience and worker experience

Then return to the play and discuss:

- How does this article deepen your understanding of Pamela's workplace?
- What does The Warehouse ask Pamela to value: speed, safety, loyalty, obedience, care, or something else?
- How might an actor playing Pamela use this research to shape physicality, rhythm or vocal quality?
- How might a designer represent The Warehouse without needing to recreate a literal fulfilment centre?
- What does the audience gain by seeing this kind of labour on stage?

EDUCATION & ESCAPE

For Rae and Pamela, education carries enormous symbolic weight. Rae's assignment is not just a school task. It represents possibility, escape and proof that her future might be different from her mother's. Pamela has invested almost everything in the belief that Rae's education will allow her to leave Burra Creek and have choices.

However, the play complicates the idea that education alone can solve inequality. Rae is intelligent and ambitious, but she still needs a working laptop, internet access, quiet space, emotional support and time. These are not intellectual qualities; they are material conditions. Without them, even a capable student can be pushed to the edge.

This makes education both hopeful and fragile in the play. It offers a possible pathway, but the path is uneven before Rae even begins.

As you read, consider:

- What does Rae's assignment mean to Pamela?
- What does it mean to Rae?
- How does the play show that educational success depends on more than talent or effort?
- Is leaving Burra Creek presented as freedom, pressure, betrayal or survival?

FAMILY, GENDER & RESPONSIBILITY

Family in *Break of Day* is a source of love, conflict, pressure and inherited responsibility. Pamela cares for Rae and Pop while also trying to survive her own exhaustion. Rae, in turn, is expected to carry the family's hope for the future. Care does not move neatly from parent to child or elder to younger person; it loops, reverses and becomes unevenly distributed.

Gender matters in this family structure. Pamela's life has been shaped by motherhood, work and sacrifice. Rae's future is imagined as a way of redeeming that sacrifice. Pop brings with him an older model of masculinity: entitled, wounded, dependent and often cruel. His presence forces the household to confront harm that has not disappeared simply because time has passed.

The play does not present family as either safe or destructive. It is more complicated than that. Family is where characters are most known and most trapped, most loved and most hurt.

As you read, consider:

- Who carries responsibility in the family?
- How is care shared, avoided or forced onto others?
- How do gender and age shape power in the household?
- What kinds of harm are inherited, and what kinds of care are inherited?

THE POLITICS OF ORDINARY LIFE

Break of Day is political because it pays attention to ordinary life. It asks audiences to look at people and places that are often treated as background: night workers, teenage students on the edge of adulthood, public housing residents, elderly dependants, suburban-fringe communities, people working in service of systems that do not fully see them.

The play's politics are therefore not abstract. They are practical, domestic and embodied. They live in tired bodies, broken technology, missed sleep, unpaid care, public transport, job insecurity, school pressure and the fear that one mistake might close off a future.

As you read, consider:

- Which social systems are present in the play, even when they are not named directly?
- How do economic pressures shape emotional choices?
- What does the play ask audiences to notice that they might otherwise overlook?
- How might a production make the politics of ordinary life visible on stage?

Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
American Abolitionist





LANGUAGE

The context of Language includes the words, rhythms, silences and physical expression used in a play. Language can reveal character, status, education, relationships, emotional state and cultural context. In *Break of Day*, language is recognisably contemporary and Australian, but it shifts between everyday speech, workplace language, literary discussion, direct address and moments of heightened lyricism.

Rodgers' dialogue often sounds casual, fast and unfinished. Characters interrupt themselves and each other, change direction mid-thought, swear, joke, deflect, exaggerate and avoid saying what they really mean. This creates a strong sense of naturalism, while also allowing pressure to build underneath the surface of ordinary conversation.

EVERYDAY SPEECH

Much of *Break of Day* is written in everyday contemporary language. Characters speak in ways that feel immediate and recognisable: short phrases, interruptions, unfinished thoughts, slang, swearing, teasing and practical instructions.

This everyday quality helps ground the play in realism. The audience can believe in these people as family members, workers, students and neighbours before they begin to notice the larger social pressures shaping them.

As you read, consider:

- How does each character's language reveal their age, status, education or relationship to Burra Creek?
- When do characters speak directly and when do they avoid saying what they mean?
- How does the rhythm of the dialogue create a sense of realism?
- Where does humour appear in moments of stress?

SWEARING, HUMOUR AND PRESSURE

Coarse language is frequent in *Break of Day*, but it does not all function in the same way. Swearing may be used to express frustration, affection, panic, contempt, intimacy, exhaustion or power. The meaning depends on who is speaking, who is listening, and what pressure is sitting underneath the words.

Humour also plays an important role. Characters use jokes, insults and exaggeration to survive embarrassment, fear and disappointment. Humour can bring people closer together, but it can also be used to deflect responsibility or avoid pain.

As you read, consider:

- When does swearing create intimacy, and when does it create harm?
- Which characters use humour to protect themselves?
- Where does a joke reveal something serious underneath?
- How might actors avoid playing the humour only for laughs?

BILINGUALISM: BURRA CREEK AND LITERATURE

Rae's schoolwork and Jed's performances introduce a different kind of language into the play. Her assignment, literary references and discussions of texts such as *Lolita*, *The Tempest* and *Pride and Prejudice* create a contrast with the language of home, work and the town. Jed's theatrical ambition adds another layer: literature is not only something to study, but something to speak aloud, embody and share.

In this sense, Rae and Jedediah are both learning to move between languages. They speak the language of Burra Creek: fast, funny, blunt, defensive, intimate and practical. They also reach toward the language of literature and theatre: interpretation, metaphor, heightened speech, performance, imagination and transformation.

This does not mean one language is better than the other. The play does not present literary or theatrical language as superior to everyday speech. Instead, it asks what happens when young people have to move between different worlds, each with its own rules, pressures and possibilities.

For Rae, literary analysis becomes connected to her ability to read the world around her. For Jedediah, performance offers a way of becoming visible, expressive and larger than the limitations other people place on him. Through these languages, both characters can think about power, class, gender, desire, judgement and escape.

As you read, consider:

- How does Rae's language change when she discusses schoolwork or literature?
- How does Jedediah's language change when he performs or talks about theatre?
- What does literary analysis allow Rae to say that she might not say directly?
- What does performance allow Jedediah to express?
- What might Rae and Jedediah gain by speaking more than one language?
- What might they risk losing?

DIRECT ADDRESS AND INTERIOR SPEECH

Pamela's repeated reflections on invisibility create moments where the language of the play shifts away from ordinary conversation. At times, Pamela speaks with a clarity and lyricism that feels more interior, as if the audience is being invited into her private experience.

These moments are not separate from the realism of the play. Instead, they deepen it. They reveal what Pamela cannot easily say inside the practical demands of work, motherhood and survival. Her direct address allows the audience to hear the emotional and philosophical weight of a life that other people often overlook.

As you read, consider:

- When does Pamela speak differently from the world around her?
- Who might she be speaking to in these moments: herself, the audience, Rae, the town, or someone else?
- How does direct address change the audience's relationship to Pamela?
- How might an actor shift vocally and physically between conversation and interior speech?

LANGUAGE BEYOND WORDS

Language in theatre is not only verbal. In *Break of Day*, meaning is also created through bodies, gestures, movement, rhythm, silence, music and objects.

Pamela's exhausted body at work, Rae's focus as she studies, Jedediah's theatricality, Pop's physical dependence, Sunny's performance of authority and the repeated presence of objects such as the laptop, trolley, walking frame and warehouse uniform all communicate meaning beyond dialogue.

The play also includes moments where music, movement and image may carry language-like force. A shopping trolley can become more than a shopping trolley. A work uniform can become more than clothing. A pause can say more than a speech.

As you read, consider:

- What does each character communicate physically before they speak?
- Where does silence become meaningful?
- Which objects seem to carry emotional or symbolic weight?
- How might movement, music or stillness extend the language of the script?
- How does the play ask audiences to listen beyond words?

RAE

Ignoring it's poetry, mythology, parody. Of course it's shocking. The fucking world is!

PAMELA

Don't swear!

RAE / PAMELA

You swear all the time.

SCENE 1

JEDEDIAH

It's not in my universe. I mean who the fuck understands what they're saying anyway? - And all the plays, we all know how they end. Hamlet they all die. Romeo and Juliet they die. Like, where's the dramatic tension in that? And yeah, I get it, Prospero's imperialism, he's power, Caliban's a slave, trapped on the Island, I'm trapped, we're all trapped. But I'm sick of havin' to bend over to the olden days. Like, what about us now, our stories?

SCENE 13



THEATRE STYLES

When interpreting a script, theatre styles can help identify the theatrical traditions, conventions and possibilities suggested by the writing. Theatre styles are not fixed rules. They are lenses that can help us notice how a play might work in performance.

Break of Day is written in a mostly realistic style, but it is not limited to realism. The play combines recognisable contemporary Australian dialogue and situations with direct address, heightened language, fluid staging, music, movement and symbolic images. This makes it useful to think of the play as both grounded and theatrical: it asks audiences to believe in the everyday world of Burra Creek, while also allowing that world to open into something more poetic

REALISM AND NATURALISM

The primary theatre style suggested by *Break of Day* is realism, with strong elements of naturalism. The characters speak in recognisable contemporary language, the relationships are psychologically detailed, and the events of the play unfold in a mostly linear way across one long night. The world of the play includes familiar locations, social pressures and practical problems: school deadlines, work shifts, public transport, family care, job insecurity, broken technology and money stress.

A realistic acting style would allow audiences to believe in these characters as people living under real pressure. Small shifts in tone, silence, eye contact, hesitation and physical exhaustion may be just as important as larger emotional outbursts.

As you read, consider:

- Which moments in the play feel most realistic or true to everyday life?
- How does the dialogue support a realistic acting style?
- What details make the family, workplace and town feel believable?
- How might actors show exhaustion, stress or love without overplaying them?

SOCIAL REALISM

Break of Day can also be understood through the lens of social realism. Social realism focuses attention on ordinary people and the social conditions that shape their lives. Rather than presenting class, poverty, work or education as abstract issues, the play shows how these forces are experienced through bodies, relationships and daily routines.

Pamela's night shift, Rae's school deadline, Pop's care needs and Jedediah's ambition are all personal, but they are also social. The play asks audiences to see how systems of labour, education, family and money press into private life.

In this sense, the play's realism is not only about making the world look 'true'. It is about making visible the conditions under which people are expected to keep going.

As you read, consider:

- How does the play show class through action rather than explanation?
- Which social systems shape the characters' choices?
- How does the play make ordinary labour dramatically significant?
- What might a production emphasise if it wanted to highlight the play's social realism?

HEIGHTENED THEATRICALITY

Although *Break of Day* is grounded in realism, it also contains moments of heightened theatricality. Pamela's direct address, the repeated idea of invisibility, the script's fluid movement between public and private spaces, and moments of music or physical image allow the play to move beyond literal representation.

The set note that there should be 'no walls' is especially important. It suggests that a production does not need to recreate Burra Creek realistically, location by location. Instead, the stage might allow different spaces to sit beside one another: warehouse, home, bathroom, street, office, carpark, memory and imagination. This creates opportunities for symbolic staging.

Heightened theatricality can help an audience experience the inner life of the characters. Pamela may be surrounded by people and systems, yet feel unseen. Rae may be sitting in a small unit, yet imaginatively reaching into literature, study and the possibility of another life. Jedediah may be in Burra Creek, yet performing himself into a larger world.

As you read, consider:

- Where does the play move beyond everyday realism?
- How might direct address shift the audience's relationship to Pamela?
- How could lighting, sound, movement or design make invisibility visible?
- Which objects or images in the play might become symbolic on stage?

POLITICAL THEATRE AS A LENS

Break of Day does not announce itself as a political play in an obvious or slogan-driven way. However, it can still be read through the lens of political theatre because it asks audiences to examine the social systems that shape the characters' lives.

The play's politics are embedded in ordinary circumstances: a warehouse shift, school access, surveillance, public housing, family care, class aspiration and casualised labour. A production could choose to foreground these systems, encouraging the audience to think not only about what happens to Pamela and Rae, but why their lives are structured this way.

This does not mean the play stops being emotionally truthful. In *Break of Day*, the personal and political are inseparable.

As you read, consider:

- Which systems of power are present in the play?
- How could a production make those systems visible?
- Does the play ask audiences mainly to feel for the characters, or also to question the world around them?
- How might staging choices shift the audience between empathy and critique?

ECLECTIC THEATRE

Because *Break of Day* draws on several theatrical approaches, Eclectic Theatre may be a useful overall style lens. Eclectic Theatre combines conventions from different styles rather than belonging neatly to one tradition.

A production of *Break of Day* might use:

- realistic acting and contemporary dialogue
- social realism through its focus on class and labour
- direct address and monologue
- symbolic design
- music and sound
- movement or stylised physical sequences
- fluid transitions between locations
- political theatre conventions that expose systems of power

The strength of an eclectic interpretation lies in how clearly these choices work together. A production does not need to use every possible convention. It needs to decide which theatrical tools best reveal the play's meanings.

As you read, consider:

- Which theatre style feels most strongly implied by the script?
- Where does the play invite a departure from realism?
- How might different styles change the audience's understanding of Pamela, Rae, Jedediah, Pop or Sunny?
- If you were directing the play, which style or combination of styles would you foreground?
- How would your style choices support your interpretation of the play?

THEMES

MODERN LABOUR

More than just a source of income, work in *Break of Day* shapes bodies, time, self-worth and survival. Pamela's job at The Warehouse gives the play one of its clearest images of contemporary work: a system that needs human labour, while also making workers feel temporary, monitored and replaceable.

The Warehouse values Pamela according to what she can produce. Her body, time and attention are useful while they serve the system efficiently. When she breaks the rules, the response is procedural rather than human. The system does not stop to understand the pressure she is under; it simply decides what kind of worker she has become.

This theme extends beyond Pamela's paid job. Across the play, characters are often valued for what they can do, provide or carry. Pamela works, mothers and cares. Rae is expected to work toward a future. Jedediah works casually while trying to make room for performance and imagination. Pop's dependence complicates his former authority. Usefulness becomes one of the ways people are measured.

Break of Day asks audiences to consider the human cost of a world that depends on work while making workers feel disposable. Pamela is watched, timed and needed, but that is not the same as being seen or valued.

THE PLAY ASKS:

- How does The Warehouse define Pamela's value?
- What happens when a person is treated as replaceable?
- Which kinds of work are visible in the play, and which are hidden?
- How does paid work affect family life?
- What is the difference between being useful and being valued?
- How does the play ask audiences to see workers differently?





CLASS & WORTH

Class in *Break of Day* informs how characters see themselves, how they are seen by others, what they believe they deserve, and what futures they can imagine.

Pamela wants Rae to have more choices than she has had. This hope is full of love, but it also reveals Pamela's fear that her own life has been judged as small, ordinary or failed. Rae's success becomes emotionally loaded because it seems to promise proof that their family is worth more than the world has allowed.

The play also challenges any simple view of Burra Creek as a place to escape. Rae sees limitation and wants out. Pamela sees danger in staying. But Jed sees community, story, performance and possibility. His attachment to Burra Creek complicates the idea that worth only exists somewhere else, or that leaving is the only sign of success.

Break of Day asks audiences to notice how class can produce both shame and pride. It can make people defensive, ambitious, resentful, loyal, funny, loving and afraid. The play does not treat working-class life as a problem to be solved. It treats it as a world of intelligence, pressure, humour, damage and dignity.

THE PLAY ASKS:

- How does class shape what each character believes is possible?
- When do characters feel shame, pride or defensiveness about where they come from?
- Why does Rae's future matter so much to Pamela?
- How does Jed challenge the idea that success means leaving?
- Who is treated as having potential in the play?
- How does the play show dignity in places or people that might be overlooked?



HOPE & ESCAPE

Hope in *Break of Day* is powerful, but it is not gentle. It carries pressure.

For Pamela, Rae's future represents the possibility of escape: from Burra Creek, from financial stress, from limited choices, and from repeating the life Pamela has lived. This hope gives Pamela purpose, but it also places enormous weight on Rae. Her assignment, her education and her ambition come to stand for more than personal success. They become proof that something different might still be possible.

Rae wants a future beyond Burra Creek, but the play does not present escape as simple. Leaving can mean freedom, but it can also mean pressure, separation, guilt or fear of failure. To escape, Rae must succeed inside systems that are not equally accessible to everyone.

Jedediah offers a different relationship to hope. He does not only dream of leaving; he imagines making something where he is. Through theatre, performance and community, he suggests that transformation might also happen locally. His hope complicates the idea that the only way to survive Burra Creek is to get out.

Break of Day asks audiences to consider what hope costs, especially when one person is asked to carry it for a whole family.

THE PLAY ASKS:

- What does escape mean to Pamela?
- What does escape mean to Rae?
- Why does Rae's future carry so much pressure?
- How does Jed offer a different model of hope?
- Can staying be hopeful as well as leaving?
- What happens when hope becomes another kind of burden?





CARE & SACRIFICE

Care in *Break of Day* is practical, physical and exhausting. It appears through work, parenting, elder care, protection, worry, cleaning, feeding, driving, staying awake, solving problems and trying to hold a family together when there is very little space to rest.

Pamela's care for Rae is tied to sacrifice. She wants Rae to have a future that does not repeat her own life, and much of her energy is directed toward making that possible. Rae's education becomes part of this care. Her assignment is not just a school task; it carries Pamela's hope that Rae might escape Burra Creek, avoid the same pressures, and have more choices.

But care can also become pressure. Rae is loved fiercely, but she is also asked to carry the weight of Pamela's sacrifice. Her future becomes proof that the struggle has meant something. This makes the relationship between mother and daughter tender, volatile and deeply unequal.

The play also shows care moving in difficult directions. Pamela cares for Pop, despite the harm he has caused. Rae is pulled into adult responsibilities before she is fully ready. Care is not always freely chosen, and it is not always gentle. Sometimes it is inherited, demanded or forced by circumstance.

THE PLAY ASKS:

- When does care feel like love, and when does it feel like burden?
- Who is expected to care in this family?
- What has Pamela sacrificed for Rae's future?
- What does Rae's education mean to Pamela?
- How does care become pressure?
- Can care still be care when it is mixed with anger, resentment or harm?



GENDER, POWER & VIOLENCE

Break of Day explores how gender shapes power inside families, workplaces and communities. This theme is most visible through Pamela, Rae and Pop, but it also sits beneath many of the play's tensions: who is believed, who is protected, who is expected to endure, and who is allowed to take up space.

Pamela's life has been shaped by gendered expectations around motherhood, work and sacrifice. She is expected to provide, protect, care, manage and keep going, even when she is exhausted. Rae is growing up inside those expectations too, but she is also trying to resist them. Her intelligence, anger and ambition become ways of pushing back against the limits placed around her.

Pop brings an older model of masculinity into the household: entitled, dependent, defensive and harmful. His presence forces the family to confront violence that has not disappeared simply because time has passed. The play suggests that harm can be inherited through silence, denial, habit and the everyday structures of family life.

Violence in *Break of Day* is not only physical. It can appear as control, dismissal, humiliation, threat, neglect, coercion or the refusal to take responsibility. The play asks audiences to notice how power can operate quietly inside intimate relationships, and how difficult it can be to name harm when it is tangled with care, age, dependence and family loyalty.

THE PLAY ASKS:

- How does gender shape power in Pamela's family?
- What expectations are placed on Pamela as a mother, daughter and worker?
- How does Rae resist the roles that may be expected of her?
- What kind of masculinity does Pop represent?
- How does the play show violence beyond physical action?
- What makes inherited harm difficult to confront or interrupt?



THE PRODUCTION



The following is a series of questions to ignite students' imaginations about how the playtext might be interpreted on stage. A long list (but certainly not exhaustive!), these prompts and provocations are based on many of the contexts and themes already explored in this Prompt Pack.

This could be delivered as an open class discussion, workshop activity in groups, or individual writing task. Remember: strong interpretations are not about explaining everything. They are about making clear, intentional choices that shape how an audience experiences the play.

Keep pulling threads.

HOW DOES TIME SHAPE YOUR INTERPRETATION?

- How will the production create the feeling of one long night moving toward morning?
- Should time feel fast, pressured and relentless, or should some moments stretch, pause or become suspended?
- How might lighting mark the shift from evening to night shift, early morning and the break of day?
- How might sound, silence or rhythm help the audience feel exhaustion building?
- Should Rae's 8am deadline feel constantly present, or should it sit beneath the action more quietly?
- How might the actors show the physical and emotional effects of tiredness?
- What should change in the world of the stage when morning finally arrives?
- Does the break of day feel like relief, exposure, rupture, survival, or something more complicated?

HOW DOES BURRA CREEK SHAPE YOUR INTERPRETATION?

- What kind of place is Burra Creek in your production: a town, suburb, satellite city, public housing estate, industrial fringe, or something less fixed?
- How specific should Burra Creek feel to an Australian audience?
- Should the audience recognise Burra Creek as a real kind of place, even though it is fictional?
- How might the design show the relationship between home, work, school, shops, public transport and public space?
- Does Burra Creek feel like a trap, a home, a system, a community, or all of these at once?
- How might the production show Rae's desire to leave and Jed's attachment to staying?
- Should Burra Creek feel harsh, funny, lonely, alive, ordinary, beautiful, or overlooked?
- What details might help the audience understand the dignity and complexity of this place?

HOW MIGHT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES BE STAGED?

- How might the stage reflect the script's note that there should be 'no walls'?
- Should home, warehouse, bathroom, street, carpark and public spaces sit beside one another on stage?
- Should locations transform clearly, or should they bleed into one another?
- How might the audience see 'beyond closed doors' without the production becoming literal or invasive?
- What should remain exposed on stage?
- What should remain hidden?
- How might staging private moments in visible space affect the audience's relationship to Pamela, Rae and Pop?
- Does the set suggest realism, symbolism, surveillance, memory, exhaustion, or a combination of these?

HOW IS THE WAREHOUSE EXPERIENCED ON STAGE?

- Should The Warehouse feel realistic, abstract, overwhelming, mechanical or almost invisible?
- How might design suggest scale without needing to build a literal fulfilment centre?
- What role could lighting, sound, screens, movement or repetition play in creating the workplace?
- How might Pamela's body show the demands of night shift labour?
- Should the audience feel the speed and pressure of warehouse work?
- How might surveillance be represented theatrically?
- Is Pamela being watched by people, technology, systems, the audience, or all of these?
- How could the production show the difference between Pamela being monitored and Pamela being truly seen?

HOW DOES CLASS APPEAR ON STAGE?

- How might costume, objects, props and space reveal class without relying on stereotype?
- What details might show financial pressure in Pamela and Rae's home?
- How might the production show the difference between scarcity and neglect?
- How can Burra Creek be staged with humour, intelligence and dignity as well as pressure?
- How might actors avoid caricature when playing working-class characters?
- What forms of pride, shame, defensiveness or aspiration should be visible?
- How does the production show that class shapes choices, rather than simply 'background'?
- What might the audience notice about class that they might otherwise overlook?

HOW DO LITERATURE, THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE ENTER THE WORLD OF THE PLAY?

- How should Rae's literary references sit inside the world of Burra Creek?
- Should the texts Rae studies feel separate from her life, or deeply connected to it?
- How might Jed's theatricality affect the rhythm and style of scenes?
- When Jed performs or talks about theatre, should the production shift in energy, tone or physicality?
- Could moments of literary or theatrical language be staged more boldly than everyday speech?
- How might the production show Rae and Jed moving between the language of Burra Creek and the language of literature or theatre?
- What does performance allow Jed to express that ordinary conversation does not?
- How might the production honour the question: 'What about us now, our stories?'

HOW DOES LANGUAGE SHAPE PERFORMANCE?

- How should actors handle the play's fast, unfinished and interrupted dialogue?
- When should language feel casual and everyday?
- When should it feel heightened, lyrical or direct?
- How might swearing reveal intimacy, pressure, humour or harm?
- How can actors avoid playing jokes only for laughs?
- Where does silence carry meaning?
- How might pauses, unfinished thoughts or changes in rhythm reveal what characters cannot say directly?
- How should Pamela's direct address shift the audience's relationship to her?

HOW MIGHT SOUND, MUSIC AND RHYTHM BE USED?

- What does Burra Creek sound like at night?
- What does The Warehouse sound like?
- What does morning sound like?
- Should sound be realistic, heightened, musical, mechanical, emotional or atmospheric?
- How might music reveal inner life rather than simply underscore mood?
- How could rhythm help shape the difference between home, work, school, street and imagination?
- What role might silence play after moments of pressure or violence?
- How might sound help the audience feel the difference between being alone and being unseen?

HOW DOES THE PRODUCTION MAKE INVISIBILITY VISIBLE?

- How can an actor show Pamela's feeling of invisibility without disappearing from the audience's attention?
- Should other characters fail to notice Pamela in particular ways?
- How might lighting isolate, expose or overlook her?
- How could staging suggest that Pamela is surrounded by people but still unseen?
- What is the relationship between invisibility and surveillance?
- How might the audience be made aware of their own role in watching Pamela?
- What changes in the final scene when Pamela sees others and is seen by them?
- How can this final moment feel earned rather than sentimental?

HOW DO CARE AND SACRIFICE FUNCTION ON STAGE?

- How is care shown through physical action rather than dialogue?
- Who cleans, carries, drives, helps, waits, worries or stays awake?
- When does care feel tender?
- When does care feel exhausting, resentful or forced?
- How physically close should Pamela, Rae and Pop be?
- When might touch be offered, resisted, avoided or required?
- How can the production show Pamela's sacrifice without making her only a martyr?
- How might Rae carry the pressure of being someone else's hope?

HOW ARE GENDER, POWER AND VIOLENCE STAGED?

- How does power move between Pamela, Rae and Pop?
- What expectations are placed on Pamela's body, voice and behaviour?
- How does Rae resist being controlled, dismissed or reduced?
- How should Pop's authority, dependence and harm coexist on stage?
- How can violence be suggested without becoming sensationalised?
- When does language become violent?
- When does care become entangled with control?
- What responsibility does the production have when staging family harm, misogyny or inherited violence?

HOW DOES STYLE SHAPE MEANING?

- Which theatre style feels most useful for interpreting *Break of Day*: realism, naturalism, social realism, heightened theatricality, political theatre, eclectic theatre, or a combination?
- Should the acting style remain consistently realistic?
- Where might the production depart from realism?
- How might direct address, symbolic design, movement or sound open the play into something more heightened?
- Should the audience feel both fully immersed in the world, and yet, still able to observe and analyse it?
- How can style help reveal social systems without flattening the characters into symbols?
- What balance should the production strike between emotional truth and theatrical invention?
- How will your style choices support your interpretation of the play?

WHAT IS YOUR INTERPRETATION?

- Which character's experience sits at the centre of your interpretation?
- Which context or theme feels most urgent to foreground?
- What should the audience understand about Pamela by the end of the play?
- What should the audience understand about Rae?
- What should the audience understand about Burra Creek?
- Which images, objects or moments would you return to across the production?
- What would you choose to leave unresolved?
- What emotional state should the audience be in at the break of day?
- What do you want the audience to keep seeing after the play is over?



RESOURCES



These resources are divided into the chapters and sections for which they were used as references or sources.

Note that all online resources are hyperlinked to their source for those clicking on a digital version of this Prompt Pack but, for those holding a paper version, shorter bitly links have been provided to copy into your browser (note these are case sensitive).

In addition to the references and links below, you can also find a general **Resources Dropbox** for Malthouse Theatre's production of *Break of Day* that will be gradually populated with things like set and costume design files, recorded Q&As, extra reading, reviews and other material as it becomes available – so keep checking back there throughout the year.

CONTEXTS: TIME

- **Sleep loss and circadian disruption in shift work: health burden and management**
Research Paper | Medical Journal of Australia | 2013 | bit.ly/BODContexts01
- **Researchers believe there are about a million night-shift workers in Australia**
Video | ABC News | 2025 | bit.ly/BODContexts02
- **The perfect way to look after your health if you work shifts**
Article | The Guardian | 2026 | bit.ly/BODContexts03
- **Time and Social Theory**
Book | Barbara Adam | 1990 | bit.ly/BODContexts04
- **Is time a figment of our imaginations?**
Article | The Guardian | 2026 | bit.ly/BODContexts05

CONTEXTS: PLACE

- **The relationship between transport and disadvantage in Australia**
Policy Paper | Australian Institute of Family Studies | 2011 | bit.ly/BODContexts06
- **Disadvantaged places in urban Australia: analysing socio-economic diversity and housing market performance**
Academic Report | Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute | 2014 | bit.ly/BODContexts07
- **Outer suburbs left behind by lack of public transport access**
Article | Infrastructure Australia | 2018 | bit.ly/BODContexts08
- **Australians in outer suburbs have far less access to schools, healthcare and public transport**
Article | The Guardian | 2024 | bit.ly/BODContexts09
- **Public transport in outer Melbourne suburbs like Melton fails to keep up with population boom**
Article | ABC News | 2024 | bit.ly/BODContexts010
- **Productive Cities: Opportunity in a changing economy**
Report | The Grattan Institute | 2013 | bit.ly/BODContexts11

CONTEXTS: SOCIETY, POLITICS & CULTURE

- **What it's like to work in an Amazon Australia warehouse**
Article | ABC News | 2019 | bit.ly/BODContexts12
- **Living costs rise for all but some hit harder, new ABS data finds**
Article | ABC News | 2026 | bit.ly/BODContexts13
- **Australia's cost of living 'getting crazier' as nearly half of lower-income families worry about affording school shoes**
Article | The Guardian | 2026 | bit.ly/BODContexts14
- **Poverty in Australia**
Government Report | ACOSS & UNSW | 2025 | bit.ly/BODContexts15
- **Causes and Solutions**
Government Report | ACOSS & UNSW | 2025 | bit.ly/BODContexts16
- **The extent of poverty in Australia**
Australian Parliament Senate Inquiry | 2023 | bit.ly/BODContexts17
- **The Personal is Political**
Seminal Paper | Carol Hanisch | 1969 & 2006 | bit.ly/BODContexts18
- **Culture is Ordinary**
Article | Grantmakers in the Arts | 2001 | bit.ly/BODContexts19

CONTEXTS: LANGUAGE

- **The Doom and Glory of Knowing Who You Are: James Baldwin on the Empathic Rewards of Reading and What It Means to Be an Artist**
Article | The Marginalian | bit.ly/BODContexts20
- **Why and with whom? A study of young people as theatre-goers in Australia**
Article | University of Melbourne | 2011 | bit.ly/BODContexts21
- **Four new productions take on Pride and Prejudice**
Article | ABC News | 2026 | bit.ly/BODContexts22
- **Regional amateur theatre eyes return in a post-Black Lives Matter world**
Article | ABC News | 2020 | bit.ly/BODContexts23
- **The Viewpoints Book**
Book | Anne Bogart & Tina Landau | 2004

CONTEXTS: THEATRE STYLE

- **Encyclopedia of Theatre Styles and Genres**
The Drama Teacher | bit.ly/BODContexts24
- **The Empty Space by Peter Brook**
Book | Simon & Schuster | 1968 | bit.ly/BODContexts25

THEMES: MODERN LABOUR

- **Working arrangements**
Statistics Report | ABS | 2025 | bit.ly/BODThemes01
- **Estranged Labour**
Essay | Karl Marx | 1844 | bit.ly/BODThemes02
- **The Age of Surveillance Capitalism**
Article | Centre for International Governance Innovation | 2019 | bit.ly/BODThemes03
- **Hired: Six Months Undercover in Low-Wage Britain**
Book Review | The Guardian | 2018 | bit.ly/BODThemes04

THEMES: CLASS & WORTH

- **Addressing concentrations of disadvantage in urban Australia**
Academic Report | Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute | 2015 | bit.ly/BODThemes05
- **Inequality and education in Australia**
Article | Cambridge University | 2024 | bit.ly/BODThemes06
- **Summer of the Seventeenth Doll continues to crackle with life**
Article | The Guardian | 2026 | bit.ly/BODThemes07

THEMES: HOPE & ESCAPE

- **Hope in the Dark**
Book | Rebecca Solnit | 2004
- **COVID Catch-up: helping disadvantaged students close the equity gap**
Report | Grattan Institute | 2020 | bit.ly/BODThemes08
- **The arts in regional Australia**
Research Reports | Creative Australia | 2017 | bit.ly/BODThemes09
- **Policy opportunities for social cohesion through arts and culture**
Report | A New Approach | 2025 | bit.ly/BODThemes10
- **Australia's digital divide**
Podcast | ABC Listen | 2025 | bit.ly/BODThemes11
- **Meet the 2025 Trailblazers innovating and inspiring Australia**
Article | ABC News | 2025 | bit.ly/BODThemes12

THEMES: CARE & SACRIFICE

- **Interview: Joan Tronto**
Ethics of Care | 2009 | bit.ly/BODThemes13
- **Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality, and Justice**
Book (PDF) | Joan Tronto | 2013 | bit.ly/BODThemes14
- **Home aged care package reform a concern for older Australians as costs set to rise**
Article | ABC News | 2025 | bit.ly/BODThemes15

- **Dinner or a shower? Older people fear tough choices when Australia's new aged care changes are rolled out**
Article | The Guardian | 2025 | bit.ly/BODThemes16
- **Unpaid care work and the labour market**
Insight Paper | Workplace Gender Equality Agency | 2016 | bit.ly/BODThemes17
- **Priority area 2: Unpaid and paid care**
Australian Government Strategy | 2026 | bit.ly/BODThemes18
- **Females do more unpaid work, males do more paid work**
Statistics Report | ABS | 2022 | bit.ly/BODThemes19

THEMES: GENDER, POWER & VIOLENCE

- **Taking back control**
Article | ABC News | 2025 | bit.ly/BODThemes21
- **Victorian Labor to introduce stand-alone coercive control offence**
Article | The Guardian | 2025 | bit.ly/BODThemes22
- **Coercive Control**
Information Website | 1800RESPECT | bit.ly/BODThemes23
- **Domestic and family violence**
Information Website | 1800RESPECT | bit.ly/BODThemes24
- **Our Watch: Preventing violence against women**
Information Website | Our Watch | bit.ly/BODThemes25
- **Coercive control**
Report Findings | Australian Institute of Health and Welfare | 2026 | bit.ly/BODThemes26

OTHER RESOURCES

- **VCE Theatre Studies Study Design**
VCAA | 2026 | bit.ly/BODResources01
- **Break of Day Resources Dropbox**
bit.ly/BODPromptPack
- **Break of Day Malthouse show page**
bit.ly/BODResources02
- **Malthouse Education**
bit.ly/MalthouseEdu

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

© Copyright: Malthouse Theatre, the artists, designers, photographers, collaborators and contributors. All rights reserved, 2026.

Prompt Pack created by Lyall Brooks,
Malthouse Education Coordinator.

The person who has downloaded this document is granted a non-exclusive, limited license to print or make up to 20 copies and distribute them to students in the state of Victoria, for the express purpose of participation in Malthouse Education program.

These copies must be made available to those students free of charge.

Neither this PDF (digital document) nor its printed copies may otherwise be copied, distributed, emailed, stored or saved on a shared or public server or file service, in whole or in part, without the express prior written permission of Malthouse.

This copyright notice must be preserved in its entirety on all copies.

MALTHOUSE THEATRE
113 Sturt Street
Southbank VIC 3006
Phone 9685 5111

education@malthousetheatre.com.au

