



AN ENSEMBLE THEATRE EDUCATION RESOURCE

BY MARY RACHEL BROWN

THE DAPTO CHASER

DIRECTED BY ANNA HOUSTON



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ICON LEGEND



**Discussion
Activity**



Reflection

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Ensemble Theatre proudly acknowledges the Cammeraygal people of the Eora nation as customary custodians of the land on which we stand and share our stories.

In harmony with the rhythms of land and sea, the Cammeraygal people nurtured their culture and traditions through countless generations, and the connection continues to this day.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

PREFACE

This education resource for Ensemble Theatre's production of THE DAPTO CHASER, by Mary Rachel Brown, has been designed for secondary students and teachers across Australia. Exercises have been designed that encompass theoretical and practical components and can be applied to different stages of learning at the discretion of the teacher, class, and context.

CURRICULUM LINKS

For NSW based students, THE DAPTO CHASER and its accompanying resources have links to the following syllabus outcomes within the NESA Curriculum:

DRAMA

STAGE 6

YEAR 12 CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN THEATRE PRACTICE

Making: H1.3

Performing: H2.2, H2.4, H2.5

Critically Studying: H3.1, H3.3, H3.4, H3.5

YEAR 11 THEATRICAL TRADITIONS AND PERFORMANCE STYLES – REALISM AND/ OR COMEDY

Making: P1.3, P1.4, P1.6

Performing: P2.4, P2.6

Critically Studying: P3.1, P3.2, P3.3

DRAMA STAGE 5

COMPULSORY STUDY OF THEATRICAL FORM/STYLE - REALISM AND/OR COMEDY

Making: 5.1.1, 5.1.3, 5.1.4

Performing: 5.2.2, 5.2.3

Appreciating: 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3

DRAMA STAGE 4

Making: 4.1.1, 4.1.3, 4.1.4

Performing: 4.2.2, 4.2.3

Appreciating: 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3

KEY THEMES AND IDEAS

Family loyalty and dysfunction

Addiction and obsession

Class struggle

Masculinity and pride

Dreams vs reality

Humour as survival

Ethics and exploitation

A Short History of Greyhound Racing in Australia



A SHORT HISTORY OF GREYHOUND RACING IN AUSTRALIA

Greyhound racing has been part of Australian sporting culture since the early twentieth century, emerging as an organised spectator sport in the 1920s and 1930s. The sport grew rapidly due to its accessibility, working-class appeal, and the popularity of betting. Today, Australia remains one of the world's largest greyhound racing nations, with tracks operating across several states.

One of the sport's most iconic venues was the Dapto Greyhound Racing Club in New South Wales. Established in 1937, Dapto became a significant part of the Illawarra region's social and sporting life. Known for its passionate local following, the track hosted major racing events and contributed to the area's identity for generations.

The Dapto Greyhound Racing Club no longer operates at its historic Dapto Showground venue. After almost 90 years of racing, the club conducted its final race meeting in 2025, bringing an end to greyhound racing at the site. The closure was linked to the redevelopment of the Dapto Showground precinct and the loss of the club's long-term racing venue.

For many people in the Illawarra, the club was an important local institution. Since its establishment in 1937, it has become one of Australia's best-known greyhound tracks and is deeply connected to the identity of Dapto and surrounding communities. Its closure attracted significant media attention because of the track's historical significance and the strong community attachment to it.

The end of racing at Dapto also reflects broader changes within the greyhound racing industry, which faced increasing scrutiny over animal welfare, changing public attitudes toward gambling and animal sports, and pressures on urban land use. Supporters of greyhound racing however, argue that it provides employment, supports regional economies, preserves breeding and training traditions, and offers entertainment for communities.

Greyhound racing became a major political issue in 2015 - 2016 following a NSW Special Commission of Inquiry into animal welfare practices. Investigations revealed instances of live baiting, overbreeding, injuries, and the euthanasia of unwanted dogs which prompted significant public outrage.

The NSW Government announced a ban on the industry in 2016, making it a national political flashpoint. After strong opposition from industry participants and regional communities, the ban was overturned later that year, highlighting the ongoing tension between cultural tradition, economic interests, and animal welfare concerns.

This historical and emotional significance helps explain why Dapto - and the greyhound track in particular - features so prominently in discussions of local identity and memory, including in works like *THE DAPTO CHASER*.



PLAYWRIGHT'S BIOGRAPHY

MARY RACHEL BROWN

Mary is a Sydney-based playwright and screenwriter. She is the recipient of The Lysicrates Prize, The Rodney Seaborn Award, The Max Affords Award, and The Griffin Award.

Her works for the stage include: THE DAPTO CHASER, Merrigong Theatre / Apocalypse Theatre; DEAD CAT BOUNCE, Griffin Theatre; BETTY BLOKK BUSTER REIMAGINED (Contributing writer), Redline and Sydney Festival; ALL MY SLEEP AND WAKING, Apocalypse Theatre; PERMISSION TO SPIN, Apocalypse Theatre; INSIDE OUT, Christine Dunstan Productions; DIE FLEDERMAUS (Adaption), Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Mary's TV credits include contributing sketch writer for THE ELEGANT GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO KNIFE FIGHTING for ABC, several episodes of HOME AND AWAY for Channel 7 and THE DAPTO CHASER, which was screened on ABC TV and at Dendy Cinemas. (Filmed by Australian Theatre Live).

Mary has extensive experience as a dramaturg and script assessor. She regularly teaches writing workshops. Currently, she is working as a tutor at NIDA and delivering The Young Playwrights Program for Canberra Youth Theatre.



PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE:

I was in my mid-thirties when I wrote this play. At the time, did not think anything could shock me, and I thought I was well beyond having my heart stolen...then I went to Dapto. It changed my perspective on family, community, and what it means to be human under pressure. The track was a treasure trove of colourful characters, outrageous stories, and colloquial slang that was so endearingly specific to dog-racing culture. From the very get go, it was obvious the track was full of high stakes and big swings. In short, The Dapto Dogs was a playwright's dream.

To build trust and get the stories I needed to create this play, I spent a long time hanging out at the track. I ended up spending a big whack of my commission on beer and gambling, so I could truly immerse myself in the world. I would like to give a big thank you to the former Dapto Dogs club management, and a very special thank you to Reggie and Niffy. Their generosity and trust are what formed the heart of this play.

In many respects, the structure of a race is similar to the structure of a play. Our characters always want to win something, and we follow their struggle to achieve their goal. The tension of what will be lost and what will be gained is what makes us care. Although this play is set in the dog world, my intention was for its themes to be universal. THE DAPTO CHASER is an ode to ties that bind us, and the power of family to make or break us. I hope this work also contributes to the discourse on generational poverty and the pervasiveness of gambling in our culture.

When THE DAPTO CHASER was on at Griffin, I met a punter in the foyer, and we talked about the show. I asked him when he last went to the theatre; his response: "I saw Slim Dusty in 1973." On another performance, the front row was full of bikies. Some people also came because their dad or uncle was a dog trainer. When it comes to the arts, diversity is rightly front and centre. Representation of ethnicity, gender and sexuality is important,



THE DAPTO

CHASER rehearsal photos - Prudence Upton

but class is often forgotten in the discourse on diversity. THE DAPTO CHASER got people through the door who don't normally go to the theatre. That was big and meaningful win for me. It is what I am most proud of when it comes to this play.

I would like to acknowledge the original commissioners and producers of this play, Merrigong Theatre Company. Thank you for taking a punt on me; you birthed my most successful play, I owe you. I would also like to acknowledge Apocalypse Theatre's subsequent production. Working with these companies matured me as an artist. All theatre is a risk, and I am eternally grateful these companies took a risk on me, and this play.

I am thrilled to be working at Ensemble. If you had of told me ten years ago, I would have one of my plays on at this brilliant theatre, I would have not believed you. It is a special experience to have your work received by such a loyal and unique subscriber base. Bringing Dapto to the North Shore is a bold proposition, but it is the job of theatre to transport us to places we have possibly never been. A massive cheers to the Ensemble for saying yes to this warts-and-all pressure cooker of a play, and for backing this production with such a red hot team.

Please note, although this work is informed by The Dapto Dogs, the characters and story are fictional. Strap yourself in, I hope you enjoy the rock and roll world of the track as much as I did and thank you for supporting this very Australian work.

PS If you're thinking about getting a dog, rescue a greyhound. They are magnificent and gentle couch potatoes. Fun fact, they are the only dog that gets a mention in the bible, the Old Testament no less, that is how special these dogs are.



THE DAPTO CHASER: SYNOPSIS

THE DAPTO CHASER tells the story of the Sinclair family and their obsession with the cut-throat world of greyhound racing. It explores the heavy toll of the desperate lengths some families will go to for a shot at happiness. For the Sinclair men, dog racing is practically a religion. The family's patriarch, Errol, is a cyclical law breaker obsessed with picking "sure things" at the track. His hopes of reversing the family's dire financial fortunes rest entirely on their champion greyhound, affectionately named "Boy Named Sue," heading into the crucial Winnebago Classic.

Although bound by familial loyalty, the Sinclair family is deeply fractured and defined by their roles within it. Youngest son Jimmy, works as a lure driver at the track and represents the moral compass of the play, attempting to stop his family from gambling their lives away. Cess - the physically imposing older brother is completely wrapped up in the dog-racing subculture. He is determined to get rich and is willing to do whatever it takes to win. Both brothers are bound together by their father, who dreams of a big payday and tries to beat the odds right up until his final days.

As the pressure mounts, the Sinclairs' financial situation devolves into desperation, drawing them into the crosshairs of Arnold Denny – the unscrupulous and corrupt head of the track. When things inevitably go wrong, the brothers are forced to make life-altering decisions. Jimmy finally reaches his breaking point and stages a mid-race protest, walking away from the lure and the dog track for good. However, Cess is unable to imagine any life outside of racing, ultimately forcing the deeply divided brothers to part ways.

THE DAPTO CHASER
was commissioned and
originally produced
by Merrigong Theatre
Company.



THE DAPTO CHASER rehearsal photos -
Prudence Upton

MEET THE TEAM

CREATIVES



MARY RACHEL BROWN
PLAYWRIGHT



ANNA HOUSTON
DIRECTOR



SIMONE ROMANIUK
SET & COSTUME DESIGNER



MATT COX
LIGHTING DESIGNER



MADELEINE PICARD
COMPOSER &
SOUND DESIGNER



ARON MURRAY
VIDEO DESIGNER



SCOTT WITT
FIGHT DIRECTOR



CHRISTOPHER STARNAWSKI
STAGE MANAGER

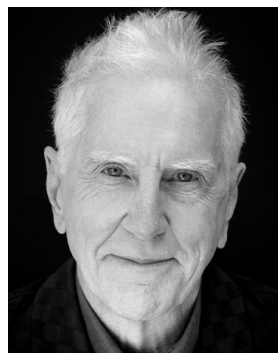


BELLA WELLSTEAD
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER



LILY MATELJAN
COSTUME SUPERVISOR

CAST



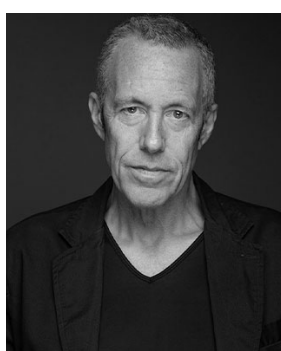
PETER CARROLL
ERROL SINCLAIR - A
dinosaur of the dog racing world.



JUSTIN ROSNIAK
CESS SINCLAIR - Errol's son
who has inherited the dog racing
gene.



ANDRÉ DE VANNY
JIMMY SINCLAIR - Errol's
second son. The black sheep of
the family.



MARCO CHIAPPI
ARNOLD DENNY/RACE
CALLER - Head of the track
and arch enemy of the Sinclair
family.

BOY NAMED SUE

The Sinclairs' greyhound. Note: this dog has been represented on stage through mime and the placement of the actors' gaze.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE: ANNA HOUSTON

Mary Rachel Brown's *THE DAPTO CHASER* swerves deftly from laugh out loud comedy to tragedy, then back again for another knock out punchline. It is both tough and deeply poetic, personal and boldly political at the same time. On its surface, *THE DAPTO CHASER* is a quintessentially Australian black comedy; once you scratch that surface, the tender triumphs and tragedies of the Sinclair family take on a resonance that is both surprising and deeply moving.

Love for the underdog looms large in the Australian psyche, and Mary has crafted a family full of them in the Sinclairs. This is a family to whom attention must be paid, and Mary wastes no time in cracking apart their loyalties and bonds, their demons and dreams to often hilarious and devastating effect. Errol, Cess and Jimmy live under the thumb of generational poverty, postcode inequality, and various addictions. As Cess remarks to his brother, Jimmy: "Money sees an open wound and it will come back again and again"; and it is in this shadow of dog-eat-dog capitalism that the brothers grasp for a chance at something better, something bigger than what they have been born into.

The key to that dream is Boy Named Sue, the family's prized greyhound and titular Dapto chaser. Their beloved dog is on a path to racing glory, and the good fortune that comes with it. But Mary's work is not simply about greyhound racing, and Boy Named Sue is more than just a pup – he is an act of faith; he is every hope or ambition that any of us have ever clung to, a dream that relies on just the right constellation of stars to line up at just the right moment. Mary's extraordinary writing is both faithful to the authenticity of the race track, while giving space for our own dreams and hopes to bloom alongside those of the Sinclairs'.

Throughout rehearsals I have been bowled over by the muscularity of Mary's writing, her immaculate punchlines, her ear for the idioms and rhythms of the race track. She has an uncanny knack for writing boisterous, frequently hilarious male voices that more often than not reveal a damaged underbelly. It has been a privilege to dive into the world she has created, to wrestle with these characters and their predicaments, and I am grateful to both Mary and the entire Ensemble Theatre family for their trust in me, for their wisdom, tireless work, expertise and support.

Finally – what a thrill it is to watch four extraordinary actors making their Ensemble Theatre debuts. And what a thrill to share it with you, our audience.



Q&A WITH ACTOR – ANDRÉ DE VANNY

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AS A PERFORMER?

I did a lot of theatre as a kid and then when I was a teenager I was cast in a children's television series which shot for 2 seasons. I worked mainly in Film and TV until about 15 years ago when I returned to theatre with a play called RED at the MTC and then a national tour of WARHORSE.



THE DAPTO CHASER CAN FEEL LIKE A BLEAK PLAY. HOW IMPORTANT HAS IT BEEN TO FIND THE HUMOR WITHIN THE STORY?

We've found that it's essential to hold on to the humour and levity within the play because otherwise the darkness can feel almost unbearable. It's a difficult balance but it has been a great challenge to find that.

THE DAPTO CHASER PLAYWRIGHT, MARY RACHEL BROWN DESCRIBES YOUR CHARACTER OF JIMMY AS THE BLACK SHEEP OF THE SINCLAIR FAMILY – HAS THIS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE OF DISCOVERING JIMMY IN REHEARSALS?

Yeah, Jimmy is definitely the odd man out in the family. Jimmy spends a lot of time serving and supporting those around him until he finally makes a life changing choice to break free.

IF YOU HAD ONE PIECE OF ADVICE FOR YOUNG, ASPIRING PERFORMERS, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I would encourage people to read as many plays as they can and find characters and roles that they love. Once a role gets under your skin it's exciting and that passion can go along way. That's the gift of theatre, that you have access to great writing, it's all there for you to learn from and explore! Go for it.



Q&A WITH ASM – BELLA WELLSTEAD

YOU HAVE WORKED AS AN ASM ON 6 SHOWS. HOW DID YOU COME TO BE WORKING AS AN ASM AT ENSEMBLE?

I was very lucky to attend shows at Ensemble as a teenager, and loved the theatre so much that I did my work experience here in year ten! During uni, I worked on lots of productions with the dramatic society in a variety of roles including stage management, production management, design, writing, directing, and producing. Here, I became incredibly passionate about all of the behind-the-scenes work and tiny details that come together to create an immersive dramatic world.

I first worked at Ensemble in front of house, building relationships with the production department and showcasing the skills I had developed in student theatre. I was then offered the opportunity to work as production assistant on 7 shows at Ensemble, helping to construct props, purchase set pieces, and transport hired costumes to and from the theatre. When I finally moved into assistant stage management, I was excited to gain a lot more contact with the cast and creatives on the ground, becoming an integral part of the show's management and maintenance day-to-day.

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHAT AN ASM DOES?

I like to say that the assistant stage manager is the person who makes sure the actors end up onstage at the right time with the right props, but the job is so much more than that! The ASM spends the hour before the show preparing costumes, setting the stage, and making consumable props. Whenever you see a bottle of champagne onstage, remember the ASM who spent pre-show mixing just the right amount of yellow food dye with sparkling water.

The ASM is the actors' point of contact backstage and the job involves a lot of quick problem solving. I can't count the amount of times that, five minutes before the show is due to start, I have had to speedily reattach a button that has fallen from an actor's costume. During the show, the ASM assists actors with quick costume changes and prop handovers. It is therefore very important that they know the script and keep a keen ear out for their cues.

When the show finishes, the ASM is responsible for laundering costumes, washing prop crockery, and resetting the stage so that everything is where it needs to be for the top of the show the next day. As such, it's essential for an ASM to be super organised, a quick thinker, and highly detail-oriented.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST ENJOYABLE/CHALLENGING ASPECT OF WORKING ON THE DAPTO CHASER?

There is so much going on, on the set for THE DAPTO CHASER - it is totally cluttered with greyhound racing trophies, old newspapers, stacks of greyhound recorders, and a collection of discarded receipts. Sounds chaotic, right? Well, what seems like a pile of cast-off scraps has actually been placed onstage carefully, every single show, by me! I love the challenge of making a super organised props preset look unintentional and messy - especially because of the speed with which it has to be set. Our show season is happening at the same time as Ensemble's production of THE ROOMMATE and the stage management teams of both shows work together to completely transform the set in only fifteen minutes between the two shows.



DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES IN THEATRE?

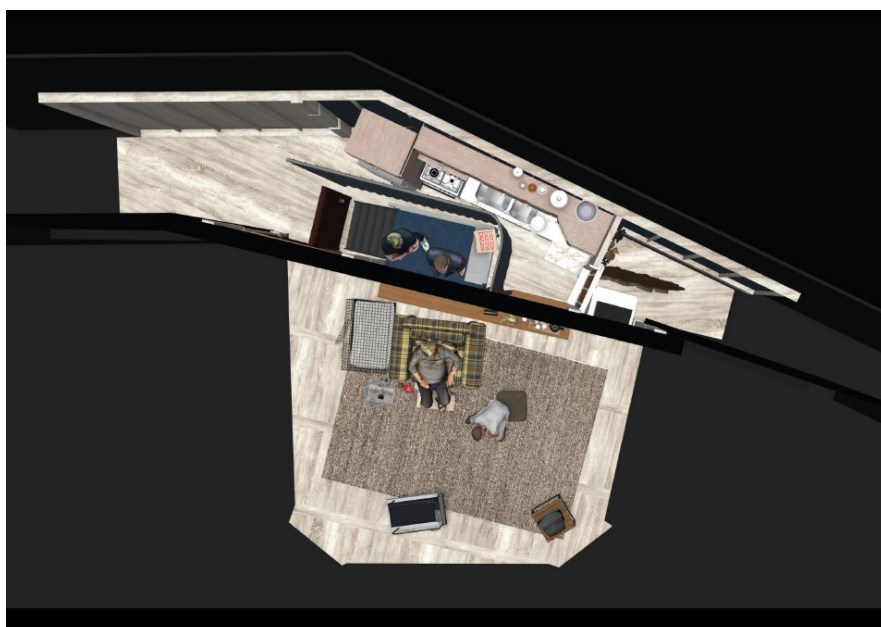
Get involved in drama - at school, with community groups, take any opportunity to work with and learn from experienced crew and get your hands dirty! Basic sewing and craft skills are super important for prop and costume maintenance, and it definitely helps to know how to iron a crisp crease into a pair of trousers.

I would also recommend going to see as much theatre as you can. Take notice of how the set looks at the top of the show, how the props and costumes move and change throughout the show, and any moments where the backstage crew might come out onstage for set changes or the interval reset. Paying attention to these little details will give you valuable insight into how much the responsibilities of backstage crew can change between productions, and the unique challenges and opportunities presented by every show.



DESIGN IMAGES

SIMONE ROMANIUK SET & COSTUME DESIGNER



TEACHING AND LEARNING - ACTIVITY 1

DRAMA FOCUS: MULTI-PERSPECTIVE MEMORY AND TRUTH

OVERVIEW:

THE DAPTO CHASER explores how family histories, memories, and personal experiences are often contested and reconstructed over time. Different characters may remember the same event in contrasting ways, creating tension between objective truth and personal truth. This activity invites students to explore how multiple perspectives can be staged to reveal the complexity of memory and identity.

OBJECTIVES:

- To examine how memory and perspective shape dramatic meaning.
- To experiment with contrasting viewpoints through performance.
- To analyse how competing narratives influence audience interpretation.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Select a Significant Event

In small groups, students identify a key event from the play involving conflict, family history, belonging, or identity.

2. Create Multiple Versions

Students create three short performances of the same event:

- Version 1: Character A's perspective.
- Version 2: Character B's perspective.
- Version 3: An "objective" version that attempts to present the event without bias.

Students should consider:

- What details are emphasised or omitted?
- How does each character justify their version of events?
- How do emotion and memory alter the retelling?

3. Performance Exploration

Groups perform all three versions consecutively.

FOLLOWING THE PERFORMANCE, DISCUSS:

- Which version seemed most trustworthy?
- Did any version reveal deeper truths despite being less factually accurate?
- How did the changing perspectives influence sympathy for different characters?
motivations, struggles, or desires?

REFLECTION PROMPT:

How does THE DAPTO CHASER suggest that family history is constructed through memory rather than objective fact?



TEACHING AND LEARNING - ACTIVITY 2

DRAMA FOCUS: PLACE AS CHARACTER

OVERVIEW:

Throughout THE DAPTO CHASER, place is more than a setting—it actively shapes identity, relationships, and family history. This activity challenges students to physically and symbolically represent Dapto as a living presence within the drama, exploring how location can function as a dramatic force.

OBJECTIVES:

- To investigate the relationship between place and identity.
- To use physical theatre and symbolism to communicate meaning.
- To explore how setting can operate as an active dramatic element.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Analyse the Significance of Place

As a class, identify locations referenced in the play and discuss:

- What memories are attached to these places?
- How do characters feel about them?
- How do these places influence decisions and relationships?

2. Devise a Physical Representation

In groups, students create a 2–3 minute ensemble performance where “Dapto” becomes a character. The performance must:

- Include no more than 20 lines of dialogue.
- Use movement, gesture, and spatial relationships to communicate meaning.
- Show how place influences at least one character’s identity or choices.

Students should consider:

- Is Dapto nurturing, restrictive, nostalgic, or transformative?
- How can these qualities be embodied physically?

3. Performance and Analysis

After each performance, audience members identify:

- The symbolic qualities of place being represented.
- How dramatic techniques communicated the relationship between people and place.

REFLECTION PROMPT:

How does presenting place as a character deepen an audience’s understanding of belonging and identity?



TEACHING AND LEARNING - ACTIVITY 3

ENGLISH FOCUS: CHARACTER VOICE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

OVERVIEW:

Errol, Cess and Jimmy all have to negotiate a complex role in the relational and cultural dynamic of the Sinclair family. This activity encourages students to examine the inner life of one of the characters, by composing an additional monologue that extends the character's voice beyond the events of the play.

OBJECTIVES:

- To analyse how character voice reveals identity.
- To explore the relationship between personal history and belonging.
- To compose an authentic dramatic monologue informed by textual evidence.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Select a Character

Students choose a character whose sense of identity is influenced by family history, migration, place, or memory.

2. Identify Unspoken Perspectives

Students identify:

- What the character wants others to understand.
- What remains unsaid during the play.
- Internal conflicts the character experiences.

3. Compose an Additional Monologue

Students write a 300–500 word monologue set:

- Before the events of the play.
- During a moment not shown on stage.
- After the conclusion of the play.

The monologue should:

- Maintain the character's established voice.
- Reference events or relationships from the text.
- Reveal a deeper understanding of identity or belonging.

4. Sharing and Discussion

Students perform excerpts of their monologues and justify their creative choices using evidence from the text.

REFLECTION PROMPT:

How does giving a character an additional voice alter or complicate the audience's understanding of their experiences?



TEACHING AND LEARNING - ACTIVITY 4

ENGLISH / DRAMA FOCUS: BOY NAMED SUE SPEAKS

OVERVIEW:

Greyhound racing is deeply intertwined within the family history, culture and community of the Sinclair family. While much of the play focuses on the human stories surrounding the racing industry, the Sinclair family dog, Boy Named Sue remains voiceless. This activity challenges students to imaginatively inhabit the perspective of Boy Named Sue, and consider how his experiences might reflect the broader themes of the play.

By combining creative writing and dramatic interpretation, students will explore voice, characterisation, symbolism, and perspective while engaging critically with the cultural significance and ethical complexities of greyhound racing.

OBJECTIVES:

- To explore perspective and voice through imaginative writing.
- To analyse how symbolism contributes to meaning in a dramatic text.
- To develop a sustained monologue that reflects the themes of THE DAPTO CHASER.
- To experiment with dramatic performance and character interpretation.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Investigate the Character

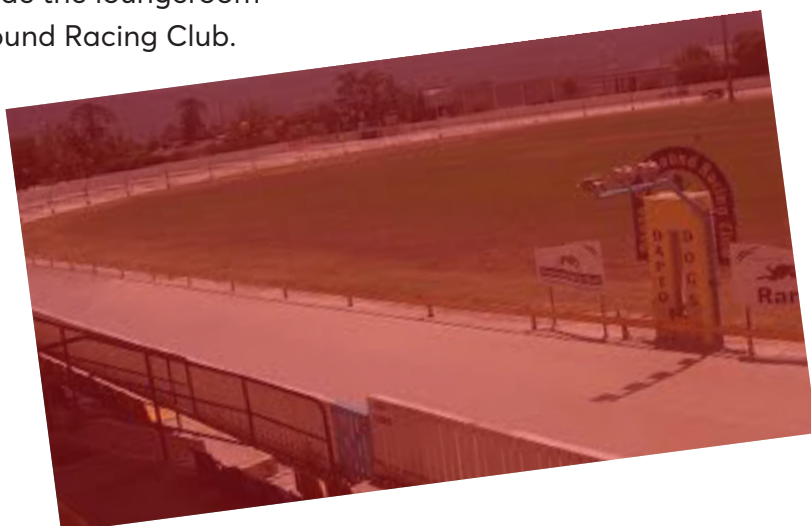
As a class, discuss what Boy Named Sue represents within the play and the Sinclair family story. Consider:

- Why is the dog so important to the family?
- What hopes, dreams, or memories are attached to him?
- How might his experiences differ from those of the humans around him?
- What does he witness that other characters may not fully understand?

2. Determine the Dramatic Context

Students choose a specific moment from which Boy Named Sue will speak. For example:

- Before a major race.
- Immediately after a victory.
- During retirement.
- Reflecting on his life many years later.
- Watching the Sinclair family from inside the lounge room
- After the closure of the Dapto Greyhound Racing Club.
- Students should consider how the chosen context influences the tone and content of the monologue.



TEACHING AND LEARNING - ACTIVITY 4 CONTINUED

ENGLISH / DRAMA FOCUS: BOY NAMED SUE SPEAKS

3. Compose the Monologue

Students write a 400–600 word dramatic monologue from Boy Named Sue's perspective. The monologue should:

- Establish a clear and distinctive voice.
- Refer to events, people, and places from the play.
- Reveal observations about the Sinclair family and their relationships.
- Explore at least one major theme of the play (identity, belonging, family history, memory, place, ambition, or legacy).
- Use language that balances the instincts of an animal with the reflective qualities of a dramatic narrator.

4. Performance Exploration

Students perform excerpts of their monologues. Following each performance, discuss:

- What new perspective did Boy Named Sue offer on the events of the play?
- How did the monologue challenge or reinforce audience assumptions?
- What symbolic role does Sue play within the family's story?

EXTENSION IDEA

Students create characters for some of the other dogs mentioned in the play – Beverly's Revenge, Foxy Mona Lisa or Flea Biscuit – and create a scene where the dogs interact. The interactions could flow from an event in THE DAPTO CHASER, or in an entirely different context.

