

Drama Stage 5 (Year 10) – script booklet 1

PINCHED by Melanie Tait

This document contains teaching and learning resources that accompany the Year 10 unit, 'Finding voice – crafting a play'.

Contents

Resource overview	2
<i>PINCHED</i>	3
Note on this script	4
GATHERED	5
LEAVING.....	11
FOUND OUT.....	13
BEGINNING	20
RECKONING	22
References.....	30

Resource overview

This script booklet is not a standalone resource. It has been designed for use by department teachers in connection to Year 10 resources designed by the Creative arts curriculum team for the [Drama 7–10 Syllabus \(2023\)](#). These include the Stage 5 scope and sequence, Year 10 ‘Finding voice – crafting a play’ unit and sample assessment task. All documents associated with this resource can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing drama 7–10 \(2023\)](#) webpage.

All rights reserved for the use of NSW Department of Education teachers and students only.

Individuals and organisations outside the department must seek the playwright’s permission to use any part of the material contained in this resource. Please see contact details for this script below.

PINCHED © Melanie Tait, 2024, lisa.fagan@lmcm.com.au

PINCHED

By Melanie Tait

PINCHED © Melanie Tait, 2024, lisa.fagan@lmcm.com.au

This script was commissioned by the NSW Department of Education. The content may be used by department teachers and students only. The content may be:

- reproduced as extracts or in its entirety
- uploaded to the department's public-facing websites
- reproduced and distributed as part of educational resources and initiatives created for students
- reproduced and distributed in professional learning packages created for departmental staff
- adapted and/or performed by departmental staff and students for public performances.

Individuals and organisations outside the department must seek the playwright's permission to use any part of the material contained in this resource.

Note on this script

Be as imaginative as you can be! You'll find throughout this script, there are no specific sets or place markers. No names. No genders. No racial markers. I've left it for you to figure out and explore with.

Be flexible with everything – a parent figure could be a carer or an aunty or a mum or dad – whatever you like!

Enjoy working out where these scenes take place and who your characters really are. Have a think about how characters who don't have lines might also fit into the worlds you create.

Theatre is about play, and imagination – so please play, please imagine worlds beyond what I've written for you here on the page.

Always try and find the truth of a scene and a moment. The truth is more important than a laugh or a big moment of drama. If you go for the truth, you'll get the laugh and the big moment of drama and it will mean so much more because it's truthful – you'll feel it and your audience will feel it.

Practically, a '-' means the line after it can interrupt. A '?' instead of dialogue means there's a wordless reaction from a character. 'A beat' means to take a moment – maybe for a change of pace, maybe for a character to think, maybe for a pause – you decide.

GATHERED

Eight contemporaries of the person 'in the wrong' meet to discuss what they should do about it. There's opportunity here to play with pace and space - as well as relationships. Who is connected to each other in this eight? Where are the alliances? Who is ostracised? Who is and isn't part of the group as a whole?

Note: you're very welcome to play with the genders of characters here. You can also use your own language (for example 'dudes' might not be the right word for your peer group – find one that is to replace it, if so).

1: You can't.

2: I haven't said I will.

1: Why are we here?

2: You tell me.

1: I heard you were going to -

2: It needs to stop.

8: He's lucky he hasn't been -

1: I don't think you understand what it would mean -

2: We all understand what it would mean -

8: Rules are rules.

1: He has a problem.

2: That problem is affecting everyone else.

4: It's not worrying me.

8: Nothing worries you.

2: It must be great to be you.

4: I'll be real dudes, it super is. It's super great to be me.

1: It's not so great to be him.

3: If you do anything you'll make it worse.

2: It'll be worse to be him?

3: Yeah.

8: He should have thought about that before he did all the things -

1: That's the thing: he doesn't think things through.

4: Who does dude? Who thinks things through?

1: He has a literal brain thing that means he can't.

8: Please.

1: He's impulsive. He acts. Then he regrets.

8: Then get some medication like everyone else.

7: You're being ableist.

2: Hands up if you don't have "a literal brain thing".

1: Looks like you're the only one who doesn't.

8: And none of you are doing the stuff he's doing.

2: They're right. It's not a licence to, you know -

4: Do you want to see him get it?

2: Of course not.

4: Do you want them to take us all home?

2: No.

4: Then keep schtoom dude. Zip it. Go buy yourself a chocolate. Inhale it. Chill.

6: You could pay for two and only take one?

4: Save your friend through the benevolent karmic art of overpaying.

2: You're being quiet.

5: I don't know if I have anything to say.

2: How do you not have anything to say?

1: You must have something to say.

3: Aren't you meant to be a leader?

1: Just because you can captain a sports team doesn't mean you can work out
significant moral quandary.

3: You know some big words.

1: So would you if you didn't spend English adding to the booger colony underneath
your desk.

3: Hey. I eat my boogers.

1: You're disgusting.

3: They're a sweet mix of salty and sweet. You should try -

1: Back to you.

5: We should forget we've seen anything.

2: So he can continue being your wing man?

5: Because he has a tough enough life already.

7: She's right.

8: How?

7: Who has more? The person he's doing the thing to or him?

1: When have any of you wanted for anything?

7: He's always wanting for everything.

1: There's never enough for him. That's why he's doing it.

7: We should help him.

8: We should alert the authorities.

1: Why don't you? Why haven't you?

8: I don't have the footage.

1: There's footage?

2: I've got it. I've seen it happen five times. I've filmed it three times.

1: You've been creeping around after him?

2: I asked him to stop. He said he would.

8: He clearly hasn't.

2: Did you see what he had this morning? There's no way he could afford that.

5: You have no idea what he can and can't afford.

1: Do you have access to his internet banking?

8: As if he'd even have internet banking.

7: That's classist.

8: You're classist.

7: I am not.

8: You are. You think he's a victim because he's poor.

7: There are circumstances -

8: You think it's okay for him to do what he does because he's not rich like you?

7: I don't think he should be judged against the rest of us -

8: You think a court of law will agree with you?

7: They might.

8: They won't. They'll put him in juvie so fast -

1: That's why we can't tell them. Please.

2: But he's not stopping. The people he's doing it to -

1: They'll be fine.

2: They don't have much either.

5: Why do you even care?

1: Yeah. What difference does it make to you?

2: It's not right. It's hard out here. It's a hard life.

7: It's a hard life everywhere.

2: It's not. Not compared to these people.

3: And what difference will it make if you tell?

2: He'll be sent home and they won't have to deal with -

3: You think they won't just be dealing with some other punk?

2: One less punk. And maybe it'll stop him now from a life of it -

1: And maybe they'll go to the police.

5: They won't go to the police. It's a bad look for the school.

1: Can't have any more trouble getting to the papers.

2: They love going to the police.

3: No one loves going to the police.

1: You'll be risking his whole future.

8: He's risking his whole future!

2: It's not right. He's not stopping.

7: Why don't we vote on it?

6: Yes! Let's vote on it.

2: We're not voting on it. Either I do it or I don't.

1: You both suck. You're rats. You'll regret it.

2: You think I'm feeling easy about it?

1: I'll make sure you're so frozen out that when we're back you'll think your socials are broken because literally no one will message you ever.

8: As if.

1: Everyone will ignore you. Like you're not there. You won't be invited to anything.

Every post you make will be trolled.

8: Make up your mind. Ignored, or trolled? I'm so scared.

1: You should be. And you.

2: I haven't decided yet.

1: Well know if you do, it's his life you're ruining. And yours too.

LEAVING

A child and parent/caregiver before a child is going away. Actors should be looking within for the things that aren't said between the two of them. What kind of parent/caregiver are they? How much older than the child? What do they want from their child out of this scene? What are they trying to give them? Conversely, what is the child not saying? What is the child truly feeling? How is the child feeling about time away from their caregiver?

T: You'll be here when I get back?

X: Where else would I be?

T: Why are you texting him?

X: How do you know who I'm texting?

T: I can tell. Your face.

X: None of your business who I'm texting.

T: Your face. It relaxes. It shouldn't.

X: Are you saying my face doesn't look relaxed?

T: We're better without him.

X: He sent you this. For your trip.

T: I don't want it.

X: You'd say no to free money?

T: It's not free money.

X: He's really trying.

T: He's really tried before.

X: All he needs is someone being nice to him.

T: You need someone being nice to you.

X: Take it. You'll need it.

T: I've got enough.

X: I forgot! I got you something.

T: Thanks.

X: You don't like it? You don't like it.

T: It's great.

X: What's wrong with it? Look. The tag says -

T: It's fantastic. It might be cold.

X: It's because it's second hand. Isn't that cool now? Isn't it vintage?

T: Yeah it is.

X: I can tell you don't like it.

T: It kinda smells.

X: Smells of what?

T: Of someone else. Of old.

X: That's part of being vintage isn't it? Vintage stink?

T: I guess. Thanks. Really. It's great.

FOUND OUT

A progression of short, sharp moments between the person who's committed some sort of transgression, and the person who's noticed the transgression. It's a chance for actors to play with tone, subtext, and pace. What are the characters really saying to each other? How do their backgrounds inform each thing they express? Who has the power in each moment, and does it change throughout?

Moment 1.

D: Did you mean to do that?

E: What?

D: That thing.

E: ?

D: You know what I'm talking about.

E: ?

D: Or maybe you don't? Maybe it was an accident?

Like you know how sometimes when you're on the bus.

And it's a long ride.

And you've tuned out.

And you pick your nose.

And then you're like 'oh my god I just picked my nose in front of this whole bus.'

E: Did I pick my nose?

Tell me I didn't pick my nose.

D: You put that thing in your bag.

E: What thing?

D: And you walked out.

And you didn't -

E: I don't know what you're talking about.

D: Check your bag?

E: Yeah okay.

D: I can wait.

E: Why would you wait?

D: To see if you -

E: Do you know where the toilet is?

D: Across in that park.

E: See ya.

D: But aren't you? Didn't you? Don't you want to see?

Moment 2.

D: I saw you do that.

E: Saw me do what?

D: You know.

E: I don't.

D: It wasn't a mistake.

Last time, I thought it might have been a mistake.

But this time, I saw you.

You looked at it.

You looked around.

You did it.

E: Are you accusing me of -?

D: Yeah, I'm accusing you of -

E: If I did -

D: So, you admit it -

E: Why would it be any of your business?

D: We're away from home.

We should be doing the right thing.

E: Why do you care what I do?

D: Don't you care?

Aren't you worried there might be cameras?

E: I don't think you should worry about -

D: Why don't you borrow some money from someone?

E: Why don't you keep your eyes on your own plate?

D: I could lend you some money.

E: I don't need your money.

D: Obviously you do.

E: You don't know anything about me.

D: I know I saw you do it.

And it's not like these places are big multi nationals.

They're run by small business people.

Like my parents.

Giving people like your parents jobs.

I'm sorry.

I didn't mean for that to sound so -

I just don't want you to get in trouble.

You're not a bad person.

But you're doing something bad.

E: Why are you the person who decides good and bad?

D: I would have thought this is a fairly simple case -

E: Okay so what if Taylor Swift's rider is like a whole banquet of fried chicken and red

jellybeans and fancy gourmet pizzas

And someone organises it all for her on some fancy platters

And she does her concert without eating any of it and takes it home to her hotel

And the food just sits there -

Is it stealing if her roadie eats a drumstick in her dressing room?

Is that bad?

D: Technically, it -

E: If there's an entire block of flats sitting empty for two years -

And two homeless people out the front -

And they decide one night to move into one of the empty flats -

Is that bad?

D: You're using ridiculous examples.

E: Am I?

D: Please don't do it again. Please.

Moment 3.

D: You did it. I got it on video.

You need to stop.

I've warned you and warned you and warned you.

I'm going to have to tell them.

Aren't you worried they'll go to the police?

E: For this?

D: Yes.

E: As if they will.

D: You've been breaking the law.

Again, and again and again.

E: They wouldn't.

D: What if one of the security busted you?

Then you'd be going to the police.

E: They didn't.

D: I worked out how much damage you inflicted.

E: 'Damage?'

D: Property theft. It's damage. To a business.

Or businesses.

I've seen it all.

E: You need to find a boyfriend. Or a girlfriend.

Or someone or something to fill up your time.

It's weird you're so obsessed with me.

D: A hundred and seventy dollars.

That's a lot of money.

E: To who?

D: To you. To me. To the shops.

E: Across how many shops?

D: I've seen you do this at five.

E: Thirty-four dollars at each store doesn't seem a lot.

D: It could be four dollars it could be eighty dollars.

You've been taking what isn't yours.

E: Do you think that first place would care if they're down thirty-four dollars?

D: Yeah I do.

E: That shop person had a brand new Land Cruiser.

D: So?

E: The deodorant I got?

It's three ninety-nine at home.

They were selling it for eight dollars seventy.

D: It's up to them.

They have to make money.

E: By price gouging the locals?

There isn't another shop for another six hundred kilometres.

D: It doesn't make it right.

E: You're saying they're right for charging so much?

D: They're providing a service to their community.

E: A service?

They're overcharging people who can't get anywhere else.

D: You have no idea what it is to run a business.

E: And you do?

D: Yes I do. My parents have a business.

E: A homewares store.

D: Yes.

E: And they mark up all that fancy junk too?

D: Of course. It's how they make their money.

So I can get good stuff.

And go on this trip.

And -

E: Be better than people like me?

D: I didn't say that.

What you're doing is wrong.

If I see you do it again, I'm going to tell them.

BEGINNING

A reminder – you can change ‘Mum’ to be any sort of person who you imagine the caregiver to be. Could be an aunty, a grandfather, an older cousin, and so on. Opportunities to play with expression, atmosphere and tension.

It never seemed fair to me that people had more than Mum and I. For no reason I could see.

The trip.

I didn’t want to go.

I didn’t want to be away from Mum for two weeks.

I knew I didn’t belong on it.

Sharing tents. Sharing all that time.

I was pretty good at fitting in at school. They knew I was different to them, but they didn’t know how different. They’d know when they saw my normal clothes. My old blanket. My toothbrush.

But Mum said ‘When are you going to get an opportunity like this again? To see a whole part of the country you’ve never seen before? People you didn’t know existed? To see dusty red plains and jumbles of rock so beautiful you’ll start to believe there’s more to this earth than us?’

Yeah, my Mum. She could be poetic like that sometimes. I could see she was the one who wanted to go, so yeah, I went.

That stuff I was worried about? Not having the right shoes? Not having a new sleeping bag? Having a second-hand coat?

None of that mattered when what happened happened.

I caught a hint of it one arvo when we were driving past a salt lake with the windows down. Air was rushing around the inside of the mini-bus. Perfume. Lynx deodorant. Burger Rings. And something else. Something sort of rank.

That night we drove four hundred kilometres to our next campsite.

No one sat next to me.

It was a warm night, so we slept outside.

When we got on the bus the next morning, again, no one wanted to sit with me. Even my two besties - they were avoiding me. Kinda smiling, but not looking me in the eye.

At lunch time, I lined up with everyone else for burgers from the barbie one of the parents travelling with us had made. I don't know how, but I felt alone again.

I asked Ella for the sauce, and she chucked it at me like it was on fire. "What's going on?" I asked her. "What have I done?"

Everything went into slow motion. Everyone else on the trip knew what I'd done. Everyone but me.

When Ella met my eye, she looked really sad. She motioned for me to meet her for a talk about fifteen metres away from everyone else.

"I'm telling you this because someone has to." She said.

"I'm not being mean," she said.

"But the thing is. Um. The thing is. Your BO has come in and you smell really rank.

"You need to buy some deodorant. You need to clean your clothes. You need to wash yourself raw each morning and each night with soap because it's really, really bad."

I couldn't say anything back.

You know that feeling? When your eyes are filled with tears and your cheeks are shaking and you know if you have to say one word you won't stop crying for a week?

And the thoughts. So many thoughts. They rushed into my head, and they didn't stop. Why didn't I take that money from Dad? Where can I buy some deodorant? And soap? And how much do these things cost? Where's the next shop? Is there anyone I can borrow money from? And are they all laughing at me? Have they got a mean name for me behind my back?

And that's how this whole mess started.

Turns out stealing that first bottle of deodorant gave me this weird rush. I hadn't felt so good in... well, I don't think I'd ever felt so good.

RECKONING

Many years later than the action at the top of the play. A busy shop. Four actors, or a larger ensemble of actors, weave in and out. Opportunities for interesting staging, pace, ensemble action and subtext.

1: How much is this please?

2: It's fifty-five dollars.

1: Thank you.

2: It comes in blue, green and a really lovely mauve.

I'm pretty sure we have a mauve in your size out the back.

1: That's okay.

2: Not into mauve?

1: Have a long held aversion to purple.

2: I like to think that mauve is really a gateway purple.

Not quite a purple. A purple for people who don't like purple.

1: I had an aunt whose whole house was purple.

Every pillow case. Every plate.

2: Did she wear purple too?

1: Every shade of it. She had a rack of about twenty purple scrunchies.

2: You should try the green then.

1: You don't recognise me, do you?

2: What makes you think that?

1: You're being so nice.

2: I'm doing my job.

1: Is this your shop?

3: Excuse me do you have this in a sixteen?

2: A sixteen will be too big for you.

3: It's not for me.

2: Sure, just a second.

1: It's a nice top.

3: It's for my mother.

1: That's nice of you

3: She never buys herself anything nice.

Probably be angry with me spending money on her.

1: I can't get over how good the shopping is here nowadays.

3: You don't live here?

1: Grew up here.

3: We just moved here after Covid.

Great place for kids and all that.

1: I went to uni in the city and didn't come back.

3: I've got the feeling my kids will do the same.

2: Here's the sixteen.

3: Great. I'll take that thanks.

2: Would you like it wrapped?

3: Great, thanks.

2: Card or cash? A hundred and twenty dollars seventy-five.

3: I'll tap thanks.

2: You can exchange this up to thirty days, if there are any issues with it.

3: Thanks very much! Easy!

2: Have a great day.

1: She was buying that for her mother.

2: That's nice.

1: Is your mother still alive?

2: She's my partner in this shop.

1: How is it working with your Mum?

2: Why are you here?

1: You do recognise me?

2: Of course.

Fifteen years doesn't alter our faces that much, does it?

1: I wasn't sure.

I'm not on social media.

You don't seem to be on it either.

2: Can I help you with anything?

1: -

2: I have a stocktake to do and we're about to do a big sale -

1: I'll take these.

2: Fifty-five dollars.

1: They'll go with anything.

2: Yep, they're a classic. Would you like them wrapped?

1: No thanks. They're for me. I'll put them straight on.

2: Use that mirror over there.

1: I always forget something when I come to see my parents.

2: Cash or card?

1: Card.

2: What do you do now?

1: I'm -

2: Let me guess. A parking inspector?

1: No.

2: A tax auditor.

1: No.

2: A copper.

1: No.

2: Hello - let me know if you need help with sizes or anything?

4: Thank you!

1: I'm like you. I have a small business.

2: That one comes in a green, and a lovely mauve too.

4: Have you got the mauve in a twelve?

2: I meant to put it out this morning.

I'll go grab it.

One sec.

What sort of business do you think this person has?

4: Are you an accountant?

1: No. I'm not.

4: An actuary?

1: Do I really look that boring?

4: I'm an actuary.

1: I'm sorry.

4: Do you own one of those hearing test places?

1: I need to stop wearing so much grey.

2: Here it is. Isn't it terrific?

4: It's lovely.

2: Change rooms are over there.

1: I'm a baker.

I bake birthday cakes.

Ones that look like they're old.

2: Old birthday cakes?

Who wants an old birthday cake?

1: The designs.

2: Good money in cakes?

1: A lot of work.

But I'm okay.

Do you do well here?

2: I'm sure you think it's ironic I have a shop.

1: Why would I think it's ironic?

I always wondered what happened to you.

2: Did you feel guilty?

1: I've spent a lot of time thinking about it.

I wonder what life would have been like.

1: If you didn't do that stuff?

2: If you didn't report me to authorities.

1: The Year Coordinator was hardly authorities.

2: It may as well have been.

That looks terrific!

Surely, you're taking that home, aren't you?

4: You don't think it's a bit revealing?

2: It's the right kind of revealing.

1: It really is.

And that mauve makes me think maybe I should be more open to purple.

2: That top looks great with these pants.

Try them?

Trust me.

4: Every time I come in here!

I mean to get one thing and leave with a new wardrobe.

2: That's the way we like it.

Try this while you're at it.

1: My life wasn't easy either. Afterwards.

2: You were able to move to another school.

1: You went to another school too.

How often do you get people for shoplifting?

2: I don't get people for shoplifting.

1: You've never had a single person pinch something?

2: It's a small shop.

1: With dressing rooms.

2: And a camera there. And there.

And that mirror.

1: What would you do?

2: I'd get the stuff back and give them a warning.

1: What if they did it again? And again? And again?

2: Do I stop them before they've taken the stuff out of the shop?

1: Maybe you do maybe you don't.

2: I've never had to deal with that, so I don't know.

1: Do you have much of a mark-up?

Do you make much money?

2: That's not really any of your business.

1: You look like you've done well.

You look like you're happy.

2: If I had my time back I wouldn't do it again.

I can't believe I was such an idiot.

You know there are still people around town who think I'm that person?

Who watch me when I go into -

1: Why didn't you move?

2: How could I move? We had nothing.

1: You have something now.

2: It's our home.

I love this place.

1: If I had my time back, I wouldn't do it either.

Tell on you, that is.

I'm sorry.

You may have done the thing but it's me no one trusts.

2: I'm sorry.

Now didn't I tell you that would look incredible with those pants?

4: Maybe I should try the green top too?

2: You should definitely try the green top too.

And maybe those gold slides?

Drawing on the relationships developed in this scene, the actors bring this exchange to an end, without words, perhaps with a tableau.

References

This resource contains NSW Curriculum and syllabus content. The NSW Curriculum is developed by the NSW Education Standards Authority. This content is prepared by NESA for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales. The material is protected by Crown copyright.

Please refer to the NESA Copyright Disclaimer for more information

<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/mini-footer/copyright>.

NESA holds the only official and up-to-date versions of the NSW Curriculum and syllabus documents. Please visit the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) website

<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/> and the NSW Curriculum website

<https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au>.

[Drama 7–10 Syllabus](#) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2023.

© State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2024

The copyright material published in this resource is subject to the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth) and is owned by the NSW Department of Education or, where indicated, by a party other than the NSW Department of Education (third-party material).

Copyright material available in this resource and owned by the NSW Department of Education is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\) license](#).



This license allows you to share and adapt the material for any purpose, even commercially.

Attribution should be given to © State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2024.

Material in this resource not available under a Creative Commons license:

- the NSW Department of Education logo, other logos and trademark-protected material
- material owned by a third party that has been reproduced with permission. You will need to obtain permission from the third party to reuse its material.

Links to third-party material and websites

Please note that the provided (reading/viewing material/list/links/texts) are a suggestion only and implies no endorsement, by the New South Wales Department of Education, of any author, publisher, or book title. School principals and teachers are best placed to assess the suitability of resources that would complement the curriculum and reflect the needs and interests of their students.

If you use the links provided in this document to access a third-party's website, you acknowledge that the terms of use, including licence terms set out on the third-party's website apply to the use which may be made of the materials on that third-party website or where permitted by the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth). The department accepts no responsibility for content on third-party websites.