Learning activities: Set and costume design

Specific learning outcomes
Students will:
- explore and analyse how design and costume reflect ideas in the play
- explore how the absurd nature of the play influences design decisions.

These learning outcomes relate to the Communication and Interpreting in Drama (CI) and Understanding Drama in Context (UC) strands in *The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum*.

Activity 9: Tramps

The two main characters in the play are tramps.

- Find one or two items of clothing or objects to symbolise a tramp.

- Present these objects to the group, explaining what you think the objects say about the characters. Are there different tramp qualities?

- Why do you think Beckett chose tramps as his protagonists?

Activity 10: Thinking about trees

The stage directions state that the set consists of a country road and a tree.

- What about this set would tell you that this play is a piece of absurdist theatre? How would the set be different if it were a naturalistic play, or a Victorian melodrama?

- There are no further directions in the play as to what the set design should be. What part of the set design for the ATC production was the designer's own interpretation of the play? How far do you think that a designer can go in bringing their own ideas to a production?

- Brainstorm by sketching all of the sorts of trees that you can think of. Search on the Internet (including clip art collections) and print out all of the tree designs that you can find. Cut out images of trees from magazines. Put these up as a collage on the wall of your drama room.

- In your portfolio, choose which sort of a tree you think would best fit the play. Justify your choice with reference to the ideas in the play.

Discuss the symbolic meaning of trees. After reading or viewing the play, discuss how any of these meanings fit with the action and ideas in the play.