



Holmer Green Senior School

AQA A level Drama & Theatre Studies

In order to give you an introduction to Drama and Theatre Studies 'A' level and prepare you for the best possible start I would like you to complete the tasks below. This work will ease the transition and keep the brain stimulated over the summer holidays. It is also great to develop the independence that is so vital to succeed in this course.

Practical Task (Acting Route)

Choose a monologue and complete the 3 tasks. If you cannot find one [click here](#) to see some good examples.

- 1) Research the play and find out about the characters and their circumstances to make choices about age, accent, state of mind etc.
- 2) Learn and stage a monologue to camera.
- 3) Watch it back and give yourself some constructive criticism in the form of a short evaluation.

Transition Work

Research Task

The following two tasks will give you an idea of theatre history and theatre movements that play a key role in the course.

- 1) YouTube channel [Crash Course](#) offers bite-size videos on theatre history and important movements in theatre, for example Commedia Dell'arte, epic theatre and Theatre of Cruelty (to name just three). Pick 3 areas of theatre history to watch and make notes on.
- 2) Commedia Dell'arte is a key movement that we will be focusing on in the course. Research Commedia Dell'arte and create a short PowerPoint that highlights your key findings.

Set Texts

We study two plays for the written paper. They will be *The Servant of Two Masters* by Carlo Goldoni and *Our Countries Good* by Timberlake Wertenbaker

- 1) Research each play's plot, genre, style and themes. Search for reviews of recent productions to find out more about the plays' themes and to find out how the plays have been staged. You may present these notes in any way you wish.

Theatre Practitioners

What is theatre? Different practitioners have different ideas. Spend some time watching and researching their work. Discover the work and practices of some new theatre practitioners you may not have studied at GCSE:

- Kneehigh and Emma Rice
- Theatre de Complicite
- Steven Berkoff
- Frantic Assembly
- Katie Mitchell.

Each company/practitioner has a website you can explore. What makes each company/practitioner different and special? What ideas do they have about theatre and theatrical experiences? What key features define their work?

You can present your information in one of three ways:

- poster (this would be in the style of an educational poster to go on a classroom wall)
- pamphlet / leaflet
- PowerPoint presentation.

Transition Work

Live Theatre Review

Regardless of what route you pick, you will be expected to be able to analyse and evaluate live theatre with focus to all the elements that make up a production.

- 1) Watch a piece of theatre of your choice from the link below. Those that did not take GCSE Drama please use pick the Frankenstein complete the booklet to assist you in your understanding of it.
- 2) Review a 2-3 minute extract from this play. Practice vividly and analytically describing what you saw, and evaluating why you thought it was successful. This can have focus to the acting, lighting, sound, costume or set.

<https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/home>

Username: WZ556F

Password: OP414G

When creating a theatre review ensure you consider the following;

- Describe how what you see – use vivid descriptions as well as terminology
- What meaning is created? What was the effect? For example, what was conveyed about the character? What mood was created?
- Why was this successful? Because it evoked your sympathy, made you laugh, evoked another emotion, reminded you of the message of the play?

Here's a few examples of key acting skills:

Voice: tone, accent, emphasis, pause, volume, pitch, intonation & pace.

Movement: gesture, posture, facial expression, levels, mannerisms, pace & states of tension.

Interaction: reactions, eye contact, proxemics.

Spacing: proxemics, blocking, levels.

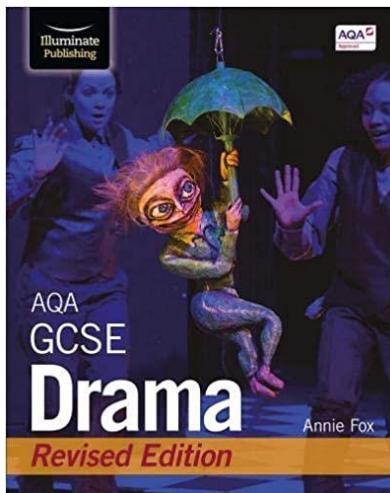
Transition Work

Brush up on your GCSE knowledge

If you were studying for a GCSE in drama, you might like to brush up on the knowledge and the skills you acquired. You can carry this into your A level studies. The BBC bitesize website offers useful revision notes on all aspects of the course, including design.

GCSE books I would recommend reading to ensure you are prepared for the A Level course are below;

[AQA Guide](#)



[Student Handbook](#)

