

## Drama A Level Bridging work

The main skills you will be developing over the 2 year course is Devising (creating something from a stimulus), Performance of a script (Monologues, Duologues and Group pieces) and exploring plays in a variety of ways. This bridging home learning should enable you to get a holistic understanding of what the 2 year course will involve.

### Component 1

- Purchase and read “Our Country’s Good” by Timberlake Wertenbaker which is your set text for A Level drama.
- Purchase and read “The Recruiting Officer” by George Farquhar.
- Purchase and read “The Playmaker” by Thomas Kenally

Both “The Recruiting Officer” and “The Playmaker” have close connections to “Our Country’s Good” and provide fantastic context which is fundamental to the background of this play.

(All plays are currently available on Amazon).

- Research historical context, 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 previously.
- Begin to create a plan as to how would you, as a director, stage both these plays for a modern audience.

### Live theatre

**Watch as many productions of live theatre as you can!**

We have access to live theatre using this platform –

**“Digital theatre ” - <https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/>**

- User name jcross
- Password nothing@1721
- Why not choose a key moment – about 2-3 minutes of footage you thought was successful – and practise vividly and analytically describing what you saw and evaluating why you thought it was successful? You could create a grid to plan your work – The who, The what, The how, The why.
- Name of the actor and the character being played, a line of dialogue or a movement. Describe how it was performed by the actor – use vivid descriptions as well as terminology. 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, successfully highlighted an important theme in the play, created suspense and tension. – and then write it up in a paragraph.

Here's a reminder of those key acting skills: Voice: tone, accent, emphasis, pause, volume, pitch, inflection, pace Physical: gesture, posture, stance, gait, facial expression, spatial relationships

## **Component 2**

- Research the following practitioners: *Antonin Artaud, Frantic Assembly, Bertolt Brecht, Steven Berkoff, Katie Mitchell, Constantin Stanislavski and Theatre de Complicite* – make notes on their theories and techniques and think about which practitioners' work you may be interested in for your devising and performance work. Use Google, You Tube and Digital Theatre to watch productions and lectures about these practitioners, directors and theatre companies. What makes each company/practitioner different and special? What ideas do they have about theatre and theatrical experiences? What key features define their work?
- Digital Theatre - Berkoff I would recommend *The Trial*, *Complicite's A Disappearing Number*, and *Frantic Assembly's Love Song*.
- The National Theatre has a YouTube channel with lots of informative videos. Swot up on your theatre history and theatre movements YouTube channel Crash Course offers bite-size videos on theatre history and important movements in theatre, for example expressionism, epic theatre and absurdism
- Create inspiration boards using different stimulus – find pictures, quotes, books, newspaper clippings, songs, lyrics that you find interesting to use as a springboard when you devise.

## **Component 3**

- Research and read a play that you would be interested in performing as a group.
- Research and read a play that you would be interested in performing a monologue from.
- Prepare that monologue for performance in Year 12.
- Stage a monologue to camera. Watch it back and give yourself some constructive criticism.

Research the plays and find out about the characters and their circumstances to make choices about age, accent, state of mind etc.

- Create a character profile from each play of your favourite character.

(Neither of these plays should be from the Greek Genre or have a historical setting).

## **Further reading**

- Nick Hern Books will be giving away a play every Wednesday! You could join them on Twitter to discuss the plays. Why not work your way through these 25 excellent contemporary plays?
- AQA Drama Theatre Studies A Level ( A Level text book)
- The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre
- Katie Mitchell *The Directors Craft*
- *An Actor Prepares* by Konstantin Stanislavski
- *Being an Actor* by Simon Callow
- *The Year of the King* by Antony Sher
- *Actioning and how to do it* by Nick Moseley.

Any questions please do email me at [pgranek@jcooss.barnet.sch.uk](mailto:pgranek@jcooss.barnet.sch.uk).

