

A-Level Drama and Theatre Studies

Entry Requirements: GCSE Grade 5 in Drama or Grade 5 in English Language and English Literature.

Exam Board: Edquas (WJEC)

Subject Leader: Mrs R Gerrard rgerrard@taptonschool.co.uk

Main Syllabus Area

Students completing the course successfully will have a thorough understanding of drama and theatre, highly toned analytical and creative skills and an ability to communicate effectively with others. The Drama A-Level provides students with the opportunity to study plays from the point of view of the director, designers, performers and critic; this knowledge extends throughout the course and enables students to apply it to their own creative work. The course provides opportunities for students to make and understand drama, recognising it as a practical art form in which ideas and meanings are communicated to an audience through a choice of form, style and convention.

Component 1: Theatre Workshop. 20% of Qualification. Internally assessed. Externally Moderated.

- Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of theatre based on a **reinterpretation** of an extract from a text chosen from a list supplied by WJEC. The piece must be developed using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company.
- Learners must produce:
 - a realisation of the performance or design
 - a creative log.

Component 2: Text in Action. 40% of Qualification. Externally Assessed

- Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of two pieces of theatre based on a stimulus supplied by WJEC:
 - A devised piece using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company (a different practitioner or company to that chosen for Component 1)
 - An extract from a text in a different style chosen by the learner.
- Learners must perform live for the visiting examiner. Learners choosing design must also give a 5-10 minute presentation of their design to the examiner.
- Learners produce a process and evaluation report within one week of completion of the practical work.

Component 3: Performance In Text. 40% of Qualification. Externally Assessed.

A one written exam paper, two hours and thirty minutes in length. Will contain 3 Sections:

- Sections A and B Open book: Clean copies (no annotation) of the two complete texts chosen must be taken into the examination. Two questions, based on two different texts, one written pre1956 and one written post-1956. Pre-1956.

- Section C: A question based on a specified extract from: The Book of Dust La Belle Sauvage, Philip Pullman, adapted by Bryony Lavery. Details of the 10-15minute extract will be released during the first week of March, in the year in which the examination is to be taken.

Qualities Required

First and foremost, you must have a real enthusiasm for drama and theatre and a willingness to extend and develop your knowledge through wider reading, theatre visits, workshops and rehearsals outside of lesson time. You must have the skills to work as a supportive member of a team.

Links with other subjects

Drama and Theatre Studies provides an excellent complement to Music, Art, English Literature and Social Sciences. However, as a subject which encourages a highly creative approach to work, develops communication skills and builds confidence it enhances student learning across the whole Post 16 curriculum.

Career Prospects

The emphasis on communication skills, confidence building and teamwork ensures our subject has links with a wide range of subjects in Higher Education. A significant number of students apply to Drama School or study Drama and Theatre based courses at University. Some pursue a career in teaching. The skills developed are transferable to any chosen career.

Extension and Enrichment Opportunities

Theatre trips to theatres in Sheffield and across the northern theatres, residencies, involvement in the school productions either on stage or backstage, theatre workshops, working with students lower down the school in Theatre Company and Musical Theatre Company. Additionally, there is a Sixth Form Theatre Company and the opportunity to be involved in the annual school play. There also may other be other Enrichment Opportunities, working with practitioners currently in the business from touring companies.

Reading list

A-Level Drama & Theatre Studies

Stanislawski & the Actor by Jean Benedetti ISBN 0-413-71 160-9

Brecht on Theatre by Bertolt Brecht & John Willet ISBN 978-0413388001

Machinal by Sophie Treadwell ISBN 978-1-85459-211-8

Theatre in Practice: A Student's Handbook by Nick O'Brien, Annie Sutton
ISBN 978-1138289062

The Book of Dust adapted by Bryony Lavery **ISBN-13** : 978-1839040306

Home, I'm Darling by Laura Wade **ISBN-13**: 978-1786824097

Blood Wedding by Federico Lorca **ISBN-13**: 978-1848426320

Degree in Drama or Theatre Studies

An Actor Prepares by Constantin Stanislavski ISBN 978-0878300013

Building a Character by Constantin Stanislavski ISBN 978-04134477606

Brecht on Theatre by Bertolt Brecht & John Willet ISBN 978-0413388001

Independent Study

Studying A-level Drama requires a flair and creativity when devising, generating and developing creative ideas which will only be developed by working independently beyond your lessons. Sometimes you will be guided by your class teacher into specific areas of study. However, there is an expectation, that individually, you fuel your own passion for the subject by exploring, researching and seeking out opportunities to extend, hone and consolidate your learning. The most successful A-level students are those that don't wait to be guided but take responsibility for their own independent study.

What counts as independent study?

1. Go experience **live theatre**: "You can't make good theatre without experiencing good theatre"
 - We run very regular theatre trips throughout the year; these trips are not all compulsory, but there is an expectation that as an A-level student you engage with all these opportunities and will want to experience new theatre to continue to inspire your creative ideas.
 - Sheffield theatres have a programme called the IGNITE scheme for students studying Drama & Theatre Studies. You can get a free ticket, and a second at £5, for Sheffield Theatres productions in the Crucible Theatre. To become eligible to book your free IGNITE ticket email supervisors@sheffieldtheatre.co.uk letting the theatre know you are studying Drama A-level at Tapton and we can provide you with a letter confirming this.
 - We have two online platforms for you to stream live theatre; you can explore these at your leisure to independently generate creative ideas and build your understanding of theatre. The details are below:

The National Theatre site is: <http://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/> when you get to the main page enter

Username: 5Wx+6Oh*j*

Password: 5Vl*5Cp+i{

Digital Theatre Plus is: <https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com>

Username: user.tapton

Password: distant@5096

2. Attend additional **rehearsals**. To refine your performance work, you must spend time beyond the lessons with your group to develop and refine your performance work ready for examinations.
3. If you have misunderstood something from a lesson or are unsure about any key concepts or content from a lesson, seek out your class **teacher** to ask for clarification and use their expertise to support any misconceptions and to seek additional support.
4. You will have **resources/booklets** provided for you from your class teachers either on the set text that you are studying or on the performance unit that you are working on. Work on tasks in these booklets to generate your creative ideas.
5. If you misunderstand the content/context/style of a set text - then **re-read the text**. By reading the content again and adding any details you find to be missing to your own notes you will be supporting your preparation for the examination. You could use a different coloured pen in your notes to evidence that you have independently worked through your misunderstanding and found the answer from re-reading and engaging with a text more deeply.

6. Testing your knowledge. Use **past papers** and model exam questions whenever you can. Use the mark schemes to self-assess but also show them to your teacher to check you're on the right track.

How should you evidence your independent study?

We expect you to log your independent study. You should have a separate folder or tab in your ring binder that holds all your independent notes on content. You should also have independent notes on live theatre that you have seen. Logging the live theatre analysis and evaluation notes is very important for the C3 examination as we will not always go through these shows in the lessons, there is a requirement that you record and log your own notes.