



# A Level Drama and Theatre Studies

# Benefits of studying A Level Drama and Theatre Studies:

- Contribution to a well rounded education;
- Opens up career opportunities;
- Ensures cultural enrichment;
- Develops creativity;
- Increases confidence in students;
- Drama is a social, negotiated art form – it nurtures important social and linguistic skills;
- It has huge interdisciplinary potential;
- Drama graduates acquire skills which are attractive to a range of employers.

“Participation in Structured ARTS activities can increase cognitive ability by 19% on average above that of non-participants”

(CASE: ‘Understanding the impact of engagement in Culture & Sport’, 2010)

“Involvement with the Arts at age 16 increases the odds of having a university degree at 29 years of age”

(ROBSON: ‘Teenage time used as an investment in Culture capital’, 2003)

“Employability of Students who study ARTS subjects is higher. They are more likely to stay in employment”

(‘Cultural Learning Alliance Key research Findings’, 2011)

# Interdisciplinary

Although Drama uses specific languages, it finds its stories in other areas of the curriculum.



# How can Theatre studies benefit me in the future?

## **Further Education:**

- ▶ Combined with Psychology – Drama Therapy.
- ▶ Combined with Music and Dance – Musical Theatre courses.
- ▶ Combined with English Language and Literature - Playwriting.

## **Careers:**

- ▶ Acting and Directing
- ▶ Make-up and Costume
- ▶ Theatre Design and Stage Management
- ▶ Film, Television and Radio
- ▶ Sales and Public Relations
- ▶ Social Work and Therapy
- ▶ Education

## **Other Careers:**

- ▶ Lawyers, police service, teaching, social work, PR, marketing, editing, customer services and many more.

# What is Theatre studies?

The study of Theatre as a whole and the appreciation of text, performance and production values.

## How is it different from GCSE?

- ▶ **Text** – social, cultural, historical and political context.
- ▶ **Performance** – fully realised and committed performances.
- ▶ **Production values** – building technical knowledge to evaluate a combination of production values.

# What will I study?

**The A level in Drama and Theatre will be assessed through:**

- **40% written exam**
- **60% Controlled Assessment**

**You will study:**

- **two performance texts in detail, one live performance and three key extracts from three different texts.**
- **You will study the theory and techniques of three theatre practitioners.**

**You will participate in:**

- **two formal performances, one devised and one from a performance text studied during the course.**

# AQA A Level Theatre Studies

## Component 1: Drama and theatre (written exam)

### What's assessed

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of two set plays, one chosen from List A, one chosen from List B
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers

### How it's assessed

- Written exam: 3 hours
- Open book
- 80 marks
- 40% of A-level

### Questions

- Section A: one question (from a choice) on one of the set plays from List A (25 marks)
- Section B: one two part question on a given extract from one of the set plays from List B (25 marks)
- Section C: one question on the work of theatre makers in a single live theatre production (30 marks)

# AQA A Level Theatre Studies

## Component 2: Creating original drama (practical)

### What's assessed

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer, designer or director)
- Devised piece must be influenced by the work and methodologies of one prescribed practitioner

### How it's assessed

- Working notebook (40 marks)
- Devised performance (20 marks)
- 60 marks in total
- 30% of A-level

This component is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

# AQA A Level Theatre Studies

## Component 3: Making theatre (practical)

### What's assessed

- Practical exploration and interpretation of three extracts (Extract 1, 2 and 3) each taken from a different play
- Methodology of a prescribed practitioner must be applied to Extract 3
- Extract 3 is to be performed as a final assessed piece (students may contribute as performer, designer or director)
- Reflective report analysing and evaluating theatrical interpretation of all three extracts

### How it's assessed

- Performance of Extract 3 (40 marks)
- Reflective report (20 marks)
- 60 marks in total
- 30% of A-level

This component is marked by AQA.

# What skills do I need to have?

To be committed and focused

Have a genuine love for theatre and performing

To be confident in your ideas and in your performance skills

You will need

Grade 6 in GCSE Drama and English Literature

To be able to work as a part of a team as well as independently

# What skills will I learn?

A range of performance skills  
including  
Practitioners and  
performance styles

Analytical academic writing

To give high quality  
committed  
performances

You will learn



```
graph TD; A[You will learn] --> B[A range of performance skills including Practitioners and performance styles]; A --> C[Analytical academic writing]; A --> D[To give high quality committed performances]; A --> E[How Drama and Theatre relates to modern society]; A --> F[How to devise and direct with meaning];
```

How Drama and Theatre relates to  
modern society

How to devise and direct with meaning

# Where are they now?

## Jessamy Stoddart

- 2014- 2016: Les Miserables
- 2016 – 2018: Cover for Elphaba Wicked
- 2018 – present: Hollyoaks

## Amy Bennett

- 2017 – Present: Studying BA Hons Performing Arts at Winchester University

## Gabrielle Mann

- 2018 – Present: Studying BA Hons in Musical Theatre at London Studio Centre

## Holly Evenden

- 2015 – 2018: Studying BA Hons Performing Arts at CPA studios
- 2018 – present: Cruise ship performer

## Ellie Hutley

- 2018 – Present: Cruise ship performer

# Tasks to Prepare you for A Level Drama: Task 1

## Reading

- ▶ Yerma by Federico Garcia Lorca **ISBN-13:** 978-0713683264
- ▶ The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Bertolt Brecht **ISBN-13:** 978-0141189161
- ▶ The Woman in Black by Susan Hill **ISBN-13:** 978-0099288473
- ▶ AQA A Level Drama Theatre Student Guide **ISBN-13:** 978-0198426974
- ▶ The A Level Drama specification on the AQA website.

In preparation for the A Level in Drama you may want to read the 3 set texts so that you are familiar with them before you start your studies. After reading each text, complete the following activities:

- ▶ - Write a short review of the play containing what you liked about the play and what you didn't, including your reasons.
- ▶ - Write out any questions you have about the play or anything you would like clarifying, so that you can ask these questions as we begin studying them.
- ▶ - Research the playwright and why the play and playwright are so significant to Drama and Theatre.
- ▶ - Watch any performances of the plays on YouTube.
- ▶ You may then want to read the student guide and specification to gain an insight into what the A Level course entails.

# Task 2

## Essay Writing

**Task:** Analyse and evaluate how the elements of a live Drama performance contributed to the total dramatic effectiveness of the production you have seen.

**Task breakdown/How you will be assessed:** In September you will need to hand in a written answer in response to the essay question above. You will be completing multiple essays throughout your course in preparation for your written exam and this will enable us the chance to assess your theoretical knowledge and ability. You will need to plan your essay considering performance skills, lighting, sound, costume, set and props from any live Drama performance that you have seen in the past. You will also need to spend 1 hour writing your essay. You will be assessed through the marking of your essay using the sample assessment criteria created by AQA. Sample essay papers and criteria are on the AQA website.

If you have not seen a live performance you can access the National Theatre You Tube channel where there is currently a new play being released online to watch each week.

# Task 3

## Practical Tasks

- ▶ - Listen to the following radio programme by actor J P Shepherd, as he discusses some strange things that have happened in theatres. 'Ghost Stories from Theatreland' BBC Sounds.
- ▶ - Read this article which explains why actors belong to a trade union and how it can protect a stage name. 'What is equity? All about the British Actor's Union in the UK' Acting in London.
- ▶ - Go on to the 'Frantic Digital' website run by the amazing Frantic Assembly Company. Each week they will use a Frantic Assembly show as a theme and based on that will provide the following: A weekly workout, a discussion with the creator who explains the practical process, a weekly creative task to inspire you and resources based on the show and the company's methods.
- ▶ If you have any questions about the A Level Preparation tasks above, or if you have any questions about the A Level Drama course then please do contact me on [hmond@fbaok.co.uk](mailto:hmond@fbaok.co.uk)