



Curriculum Overview: Drama

Principles and Purpose of the Drama Curriculum

The purpose of the drama curriculum is to help pupils gain and develop an interest in the dramatic arts, looking at a wide range of types of Drama from scripts and monologues to improvisation and devising. Additionally, we want to teach students how to work imaginatively and creatively in a collaborative context to generate, develop, and communicate ideas. We want to look at the social and historical contextual influences on drama texts and use that to inform performance, and we want to discuss the history of drama and theatre. We want to develop student confidence, competence, and empathy for others through both group work in class, and also extra-curricular offerings like clubs and trips.

Why this, why now?

The KS3 drama curriculum is focused on giving students the foundational key skills and information to succeed in drama as a form of communication and idea expression. We have a clear focus on the different aspects of a good performance, such as physical and vocal performance skills which give students the skills they need for KS4 where we deepen student knowledge through the exploration of specific dramatic practitioners like Brecht and Stanislavski, and build on students’ performance skills from previous years to create engaging and considered performances. Further, we discuss key social issues such as race, class, historical context, and gender through careful selection of key texts, such as Russell’s ‘Our Day Out’, Godber’s ‘TEACHERS’, Blackman’s ‘Noughts and Crosses’ and Russell’s ‘Blood Brothers’. Additionally, all students will devise their own performances inspired by a range of prompts, from international crime to local history, such as the Trumpington Girl.

Term 1	Autumn 1	Why this, why now?	Autumn 2	Why this, why now?
Year 7	The Bank Robbery	Year 7 begin with a structured devising task. This task allows them to explore foundational dramatic skills such as how to rehearse, how to devise, and how to characterise in a performance. Students work in groups to develop empathy and collaboration skills to devise a 6 part performance. The skills and techniques students learn in Year 7 return throughout subsequent years in the curriculum.	Pantomime	Students study stock characters and the history of theatre through exploration of pantomime. Students will study the history of the form and touch on key topics like melodrama and commedia dell’arte which continue to influence modern drama.



Year 8	The Bank Robbery	As Drama is a new subject to Trumpington, Year 8 students in the 2023-24 cohort will engage with the same structured devising task as Year 7 to give them the toolbox of skills they can then apply in later years.	Pantomime	As Drama is a new subject to Trumpington, Year 8 students in the 2023-24 cohort will engage with the same study of the pantomime and its history as Year 7.
Year 9	The Drama Challenge	Students in Year 9 in the 2023-24 Drama cohort are asked to do a one term 'Drama challenge'. During this challenge, students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and develop foundational performance skills • Work in groups to devise a performance based on prompts, mirroring the GCSE syllabus and building collaboration skills • Work in pairs to perform a scripted performance of one of two different scripts • Perform their scripted performance or their devised performance for assessment 	Stanislavski	Students will build on their work in Autumn 1 by looking in depth at Stanislavski, one of the practitioners they will study at KS4. They will explore the history of naturalistic theatre, the social and historical context of naturalism, and develop their ability to characterise and perform characters through study of established playscripts.
Year 10	Naturalism & monologues	Students study the history of naturalistic theatre in Year 10 and develop on previous learning of Stanislavski's ideas through performances of a series of interconnected monologues. They explore the concepts of given circumstances, the 'magic if', objectives, emotional memory, and subtext. Students explore how to perform a character as if they are a real person. This later is compared and contrasted with study of Brecht, who believed in a very different, didactic form of theatre.	Practitioners	Students are introduced to further practitioners, such as Brecht and Artaud. Students explore the deeper elements of drama such as action, plot, pace, contrasts, conventions and symbols. Students will also use this unit to develop their self-evaluation and self-reflection skills, to develop their ability to be reflective practitioners of Drama.
Year 11	Set text – Blood Brothers Live theatre evaluation	Students in Year 11 will continue their studying of their set text, 'Blood Brothers' by Willy Russell. They will practice key rehearsal skills and further develop knowledge of all aspects of drama, including performance, set design, costuming, sound effects, and so on.	Rehearsals and design for assessed set text performance	At this point, students will have fully covered 'Blood Brothers' and will be refining their abilities to perform from a script, how to rehearse effectively, and then begin extensive rehearsal for their assessed performances.



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		Further, students will develop their skills of self-reflection and evaluation in another strand during this term where they review a live theatre performance. This prepares them for their GCSE paper which involves detailed evaluative analysis of a live, professional, theatrical performance they will have seen in Year 10 and will be able to revisit in Year 11.		
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Term 2	Spring 1	Why this, why now?	Spring 2	Why this, why now?
Year 7	Greek Theatre	Students explore the history of drama by beginning with extensive research and study of Greek theatre's conventions, such as comedy and tragedy, choral speaking, and even the layout of an amphitheatre. This contextualises later developments in theatre as it modernised and became not just a performance art but a form of communication of ideas. Additionally, students study Greek myth and will create group performances of key myths, increasing cultural capital.	Updating Fairy Tales	Students will dramatise fairy tales/fables/myths. This builds on the work in Spring 1 looking at Greek theatre, and allows students to devise performances in groups. It allows them to further explore key skills like narration (first touched on in Autumn 1) and they will learn how to compose a script.
Year 8	Physical theatre	Students develop confidence and competence with physical performance through the study of physical theatre. Students will learn about key theatre companies such as Frantic Assembly and how to create physical theatre machines. Additionally, students further develop their empathy and collaboration skills.	Script work (Shakespeare and contemporary)	Students will study key aspects of scripted theatre such as character/plot, pace, climax and anti-climax, symbolism, mime, and design. Students will practice monologues from both Shakespeare and contemporary playwrights (increasing cultural capital) and further improve confidence and competence with the rigours of dramatic performance. These key aspects return later when students are studying a set text later in the year, and also in KS4.



Year 9	Love & Relationships (Devising and script writing)	Under the theme of 'love & relationships', students use stimuli to devise dramatic performances. This allows them to deep-dive into a key theme that students will be able to use to interpret both their set text later in the year ('Noughts & Crosses') and their work in KS4. Further, students explore how to create duologues, rehearsal techniques, and how a set or costume might be designed. This connects with the English curriculum at this time as well, allowing students a richer and deeper understanding of the theme.	TEECHERS	Students explore the historical, social, and political context of the 1980s with Godber's 'TEECHERS'. Further, they begin to explore Brechtian didactic theatre which they will use in KS4 as part of their practitioners unit. Additionally, students will develop their skills with physical theatre, body language, multi-roles, and the role of the director. All of these skills are further expanded upon in KS4.
Year 10	Understanding and interpreting playscripts Live theatre evaluation	For both Spring 1 and Spring 2, students are introduced to Russel's 'Blood Brothers' and explore key ideas such as playwright's intentions, theatrical devices and their purposes and explore the context of 80s Britain such as class, poverty, industrial action and so on - the cultural, social, and political issues of the time. Additionally, students have a thread throughout Spring 1 & 2 where they evaluate and review a piece of live theatre. Students will go to a professional theatre during this time to evaluate the success of the professional performance and will then explore how to write evaluative essays for theatrical performances for success in GCSEs and building off of evaluation skills they will have been taught in previous years and developing them further. Students will also develop their technical theatre knowledge and interpretation skills.		



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Year 11	Presenting & performing	For Spring 1 and Spring 2, Year 11 students will continue presenting and performing for both their set text performances and their devised performances. Their final performances will be given and externally examined.
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Term 3	Summer 1	Why this, why now?	Summer 2	Why this, why now?
Year 7	The Ratz	Students will weave together their various performance, interpretation, and collaboration skills through structured rehearsals and performances of 'The Ratz'. They will establish roles and responsibilities within groups as well as physical and vocal performance skills.	The Ratz	Students continue to study 'The Ratz' leading up to their final teacher-assessed performances.
Year 8	Our Day Out	Students will weave together their physical theatre skills, characterisation skills, and directing skills through structured rehearsals and performances of 'Our Day Out'. They will be introduced to social, historical, and political context and how that might link to their performances of Russell's text. This also links to later study students will do of 'Blood Brothers'.	Our Day Out	Students continue to study 'Our Day Out' leading up to their final teacher-assessed performances.
Year 9	Noughts & Crosses	Students will weave together their performance, interpretation, analysis, and collaboration skills through structured rehearsals and performances of the playscript of 'Noughts & Crosses'. They will also explore issues of race and the theme of love and relationships through this play text, and further will look at naturalistic and Brechtian techniques used in the play text.	Noughts & Crosses	Students continue to study 'Noughts & Crosses' leading up to their final teacher-assessed performances.



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Year 10	Devising	Students continue to develop their devising skills which were first embedded in KS3. Students are introduced to component requirements and how to respond appropriate to stimuli in drama. Students explore how to create a portfolio and then how to plan, enact, and execute a completely original performance for assessment. This also develops their collaboration and interpretation skills from KS3.	Devising	Students continue to devise, rehearse, and eventually perform a teacher-assessed original performance.
Year 11	Revision as required	Students explore and develop either their devising work, their set text work, or their live theatre work as needed with their teachers.	GCSE Summer Exams	

Spring Exam - all 1hr each

Yr 7 – Units 1-3

Yr 8 – Units 1-3

Yr 9 – Units 1-3

Yr10 – Mock exam looking at set text

Summer Exam

Yr7-9 – 1hr each

All topics covered within the year may be assessed

Yr10 – GCSE exam papers & assessed performances