

drama

A Level Preparation Pack



Overview

The Performing Arts department at the College consists of the following courses: Drama and Theatre Studies, Dance and Digital Music Production. Each course is taught by a subject specialist. Every year the department collaborate on a joint performance project as well as each having smaller subject specific projects throughout the year. We have put together a range of tasks and resources that

will enable you to develop these skills and enjoy what Performing Arts has to offer you at home.



Sian Murray
Head of Performing Arts

Watch

- At College we have a subscription to DigitalTheatre+. Unfortunately, we are unable to share the log-in details with anyone who is not officially part of the College community. However, if your previous school has a subscription or your drama teacher can arrange a free, temporary pass for a month or so during this period, you can watch various productions directed by Steven Berkoff (I would recommend *The Trial*), Complicite's *A Disappearing Number*, and Frantic Assembly's *Things I know to Be True*.
- Look out for any National Theatre Screenings on National Theatre YouTube. There is a different show every Thursday evening.

Keeping it Practical

- <https://www.vamostheatre.co.uk/films-and-trailers#filter=.mask-techniques> Developing physical skills: Vamos Theatre Company specialises in mask work. With the face covered and the voice silenced, the emphasis is on the body. The physical performance of the actor is important no matter what play you are doing and what style you are working in so why not work through Vamos' tutorials on mask work and refine your physical expression. Create a mask of your own (a paper plate would do!) and practice to the camera on your phone or in front of the mirror.
- <https://www.shakespeare-monologues.org/home> Give Shakespeare a go. This site has a number of monologues by Shakespeare you could try.

TED Talks

- https://www.ted.com/talks/oskar_eustis_why_theater_is_essential_to_democracy
- https://www.ted.com/talks/handspring_puppet_co_the_genius_puppetry_behind_war_horse/up-next
- https://www.ted.com/talks/patsy_rodenburg_why_i_do_theater/discussion

Suggested Reading

Swot up on your theatre history and theatre movements

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dPuudLjXtONXALkeh5uisZqrAcPKCee>

YouTube channel CrashCourse offers bite-size videos on theatre history and important movements in theatre, for example expressionism, epic theatre and absurdism (to name just three). Watch these informative videos and make notes on them. Search for online productions of any plays mentioned. Then, go down the rabbit hole of YouTube to explore these movements, plays and playwrights in more depth. Some of the work you see may be bad. Very bad. But you need to see bad theatre as well as good theatre!

Reading

College specific reading – AQA revision guide – AQA Drama & Theatre Studies by Su Fielder and Pat Friday.

College specific reading – our set texts: *Antigone* by Sophocles and *Our Country's Good* by Timberlake Wertenbaker.

If you are planning to join us in September, why not source these plays and read them?

Then, research each play's 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.

Possible Plays to Read

Jerusalem – Jez Butterworth

Look Back in Anger – John Osborne

A View From the Bridge – Arthur Miller

Punk Rock – Simon Stephens

Theatre Practitioners

Learn about different 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 <https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/articles/theatre-de-complicite-and-storytelling>
- Headlong Theatre
- Steven Berkoff
- Frantic Assembly
- Max Stafford-Clark
- Marianne Elliott
- Punchdrunk <https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/articles/a-punchdrunk-approach-to-making-theatre>
- Katie Mitchell <https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-literature/articles/an-introduction-to-katie-mitchells-theatre>

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?

Course Specifications

A Level - [Download AQA Drama and Theatre Specification](#)