**BRIDGING THE GAP: A-level Drama & Theatre**

**Preparation for AQA Drama & Theatre A-Level at BRGS Sixth-Form**

**Introduction:**

Congratulations! You have signed up to the most renowned and widely taught Drama A-level course. The link to the specification is here:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/drama/a-level/drama-and-theatre-7262>

I suggest as a starting point that you download this and scan it through- it tells you everything about the way the course works.

So… What Now?

Already you are probably sick and tired of teachers telling you that A Level is tough. Yes, it is. The amount of independent learning you will be expected to do is probably triple that which you were required to do at GCSE. This is true but Drama A-level is also an extremely enjoyable, rewarding, inspiring and life-affirming course.

When we say independent, we do mean independent. You will frequently be asked to come along to lessons having read and/or made notes on a specific creative area or project. You will need to learn to research, to make notes and to use your time as effectively as possible. **Mr Neve** will base his planning on your completed independent study and formulated ideas.

**Over the summer:**

The following things could be done to prepare you for the start of the course:

**Reading** – The set texts we will be studying in this course are:

Year 12 - Section A: Antigone by Sophocles

Year 13 - Section B: The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams

You could read both of them and try reading aloud some of the characters – note the plot and context and do some background research, see if you can find a full-length theatrical version to watch!

In addition, have a google session and make notes on some of the following theatrical practitioners and styles- it is these practitioners you will be asked to choose from when you come to create your devised and scripted work:

**Theatre Practitioners:** Bertolt Brecht, Constantin Stanislavski, Katie Mitchell, Kneehigh, The Paper Birds.

**READ** a couple of published plays of your own choosing (you have to do some scripted performance work so it may be a good idea for you to get an idea of the sorts of things you enjoy- google top plays for A level Drama students or look on Nick Herne Books’ web page for ideas about play texts to read.

**WATCH**- go to the theatre – In London I recommend a visit to The National Theatre, in Bristol, the Old Vic and in Manchester, The Lowry, often have excellent theatre productions but great theatre CAN happen anywhere. Don’t just watch musicals, whilst we do explore some musical theatre content in the A level, you will need to watch DRAMA rather than only big budget blockbuster musicals.

If you can’t get to the theatre do have a look at recorded live **theatre online**

Recommended Productions:

Lovesong, Things I Know To Be True, Much Ado About Nothing Tennent), Macbeth (National Theatre), Jane Eyre, Frankenstein, Dara, The Crucible, Antigone.

**What else can I do?**

Wow! You really are keen!

Ok well there are plenty of things you can do to prepare: Here are some ideas:

**YOUTUBE**- Have a browse on there, watch other students and professional actors - give yourself some ideas about characterisation. Look up theatre practitioners on Youtube as well- it has to be better than staring at videos of funny cats right?

**Read one of the following texts:**

Experimental Theatre - From Stanaslavski to Peter Brook- James Roose Evans.

Stanislavski - An Actor Prepares.

The Empty Space - Peter Brook.

Don’t forget- the internet is your friend- spend some time browsing who knows what you will find?

**What Should I Bring to Lessons?**

I will tell you if we are working practically in a lesson the lesson before hand - I know you are required to wear smart clothes for sixth form but these can be awfully restricting for you so I am happy if you want to bring joggers and a t-shirt for practical lessons if you prefer, however these must be worn to the lesson and not changed into during the lesson as this takes up a lot of time.

You will need one lever arch file, lined and plain paper, post it notes, highlighters, dividers, poly pockets.

If you want to make notes (and you can type quickly enough!)