



DRAMA AND THEATRE: BRIDGING ACTIVITY

You need to do three things to be a top-quality dramatist – watch theatre, read plays and create. The more you do these three things, the more you will fall in love with theatre, deepen your appreciation and understanding of the art-form and develop your ability to produce sophisticated pieces of theatre. Doing any of these will develop your knowledge and ability but the top drama students find the balance between all three:

- **Watching theatre** is the best way a drama practitioner gets inspired and generates initial ideas. You will see things on stage which will make you think or feel a certain way; it may prompt a cathartic response or shock you or make you consider a topic in a completely new light. As practitioners, we are constantly stealing and adapting each other's ideas to create great theatre.
- **Reading plays** gives you a deeper appreciation of the history and tradition of theatre. It also allows you to consider a story and imagine your own directorial, design and performance interpretations. The more you read, the more you exercise your imagination.
- **Creating** is crucial to actually applying and practising the skills and ideas you get from watching and reading theatre. You cannot be a top-quality dramatist if you do not practise the craft. And the process works both ways. Watching theatre and reading plays will make you a more inspired and informed creator. But creating will also give you a deeper and richer appreciation of the plays you watch and read.

TASK 1 – Component 3 Section B ‘That Face’ by Polly Stenham

(The play script is available to purchase from Amazon approx. £9)

Polly Stenham on playwriting:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPWdwTNjOUU>

Read the complete play. In pencil annotate your script with ideas from a performer's point of view and a designer's (Costume, lighting, sound and set) point of view. This text forms the basis of the 40% written exam.

TASK A – Exam style question; as a performer, how would you use voice and proxemics to create an impact on the audience in the portrayal of one character. You MUST refer to the extract and the play as a whole. Refer to the extract on Page 53 (Henry enters) – Page 55 (towards the end ... Henry shakes his head)

TASK B – Create a ‘Shoe box’ 3D set design of any one of the eight scenes in ‘That Face.’ Include clear wings as entrances and exits along with any use of levels, stage furniture and set.

TASK 2 – Component 2 Text in Performance

As an A-Level Drama and Theatre student you will be expected to perform two different extracts from the same play. One as a monologue/duologue and one group performance.

Select a post 2000 (Contemporary) play of your choice and select either a monologue or duologue (You will need to work with another student) to learn. You will perform this in September and will be assessed on your vocal and physical ability.

TASK 3 – Practitioners

During the duration of the course, you will explore the work of at least three different drama practitioners. Choose a drama practitioner of your choice and produce an A4 size 'Fact File.' As well as an overview of the individual there should also be a focus of what their ideas/theories look like in practice

TASK 4 – Component 3 Section A - Live Theatre

Watch as much as you can over the summer holiday. And make sure it's good quality. While West End musicals have their own dramatic value, they do not really count here (and are often very expensive). Watch theatre that is going to stretch you and prepare you for A' level. Complete a theatre log and prepare a PowerPoint presentation that communicates what you have seen. Due to Covid-19 restrictions it may not be possible to see live performances in a theatre.

Mainstream theatre with excellent productions;

THE NATIONAL <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/whats-on>

THE BARBICAN <https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on>

THE ROYAL COURT <https://royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/>

THEATRE ROYAL STRATFORD EAST <https://www.stratfordeast.com/whats-on/>

THE OLD VIC <https://www.oldvictheatre.com/whats-on>

THE YOUNG VIC <https://www.youngvic.org/whats-on>

Local Theatre;

THE BRENTWOOD THEATRE <https://brentwood-theatre.co.uk/whats-on/>

THE QUEENS THEATRE <https://www.queens-theatre.co.uk/whats-on/>

CHELMSFORD CIVIC THEATRE <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/theatres/>

THE MERCURY THEATRE <https://www.mercurytheatre.co.uk/whats-on/>

Alternative Options

If you are struggling to afford theatre tickets or getting into London is problematic or you just want to watch as much as possible between live visits to the theatre, consider these alternative options:

- National Theatre Live – The National Theatre regularly film and broadcast their plays to cinemas around the country. For the price of a cinema ticket, you can sit and watch a piece of theatre on the big screen while it is being performed live.
- Digital Theatre – The home option. For a small fee, you can download previously performed pieces. They don't have a huge selection but what they do have is brilliant and you can rent a play for just £1.99.
- Amateur Dramatics – There are lots of am-dram performance companies in Brentwood. These are great to checkout. They are local (less travelling), tend to be cheap and they show you what you can do with a non-professional cast and a shoe-string budget (exactly the kind of constraints you will be performing under.)

CREATE A THEATRE LOG OF EVIDENCE

Date	Play	Playwright	Where did you see it?	Give a brief review (what was interesting about this piece? What did you like about it? Did anything about the performance, direction or design inspire you? Are there any ideas you can steal?) Continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary