

# Contents

## GCSE in Drama Teachers' Guide

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Rationale	3
1.2 Overview of New Specification	4
1.3 Changes for teaching from September 2009	5
<b>2. Delivering the specification</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Pathways through the Specification	6
2.2 Examples of Approaches	12
<b>3. Support for Teachers</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1 Generic Resources	14
<b>4. Unit Guides</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 DR1 Devised Practical Performance	15
4.2 DR2 Performance from a Text	28
4.3 DR3 Written Examination	30
4.4 DR3 Written Evaluation	32
<b>5. Assessment Guidance</b>	<b>38</b>
5.1 DR1A Devised Practical Performance (Controlled Assessment)	38
5.2 DR1B Devised Performance Report (Controlled Assessment)	38
5.3 DR2 Performance from a Text (External Assessment)	42
5.4 DR3 Written Examination (External Assessment)	43
<b>Contributors to the Teachers' Guide</b>	<b>46</b>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The WJEC GCSE Drama specification has been modified and updated for delivery from September 2009. The first GCSE awards will be made in summer 2011. For the first availability of units, see page 2 of the specification. The specification can be delivered and assessed in centres throughout the UK.

This guide is one of a number of ways in which WJEC provides assistance to teachers delivering the new specification. Also essential to its introduction are the Specimen Assessment Materials (question papers and marking schemes) and professional development (INSET) conferences.

Other provision which you will find useful includes:

- 1 Examiners' reports on each examinations series
- 2 Free access to past question papers via WJEC's secure website
- 3 Easy access to specification and other key documents on main website
- 4 Regular INSET delivered by Chief Examiners
- 5 Easy access to both the Subject Officer and to administrative sections

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## **1.1 Rationale**

This specification fosters candidates' creativity, personal growth, self confidence, communication and analytical skills through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding and the exercise of the imagination. It promotes pupils' involvement in and enjoyment of drama as performers, devisers, directors and designers. It provides opportunities for students to attend professional and community dramatic performances and to develop their skills as informed and thoughtful audience members.

Through the study of this specification, pupils will be given opportunities to participate in and interpret their own and others' drama. They will investigate the forms, styles, and contexts of drama and will learn to work collaboratively to develop ideas, to express feelings, to experiment with technical elements and to reflect on their own and others' performances.

By studying GCSE Drama, pupils will learn more about the subject and its contribution to social and cultural commentary and will come to appreciate that drama, whether intended for audiences or not, provides significant opportunities for expressing cultural and personal identity.

## 1.2 Overview of the Specification

This is a unitised specification. It is divided into a total of 3 units. Units may be re-taken once only (with the better result counting) before aggregation for the subject award.

### Controlled Assessment (AO1, AO2, AO3)

#### UNIT ONE (DR1) 60% Devised Practical Performance (120 marks: 120 UMS)

##### TASK ONE – 40% Devised Performance (AO1, AO2)

Candidates will devise a practical performance based on a theme, linked with a practitioner or genre.

- Candidates may choose **either** acting or a theatre design skill;
- If candidates select theatre design in this task, they must select acting in the performance from a text (externally assessed);
- Teachers record the work on DVD/Video;
- Internally assessed;
- Externally moderated with task two in February.

##### TASK TWO – 20% Devised Performance Report (AO3)

Candidates will complete a written report of the practical work they completed in Task One, under formal supervision.

- The report should include details of live performances candidates have seen, that have influenced their practical work; details on decision making, the inclusion of technical elements and the content of the piece and an evaluation of their own work and that of the group;
- Internally assessed;
- Externally moderated with task one in February.

### External Assessment (AO2)

#### UNIT TWO (DR2) 20% Performance from a Text (50 marks: 40 UMS )

Candidates will be assessed on **either** their acting **or** a theatre design skill, in a scene from a published play.

- Candidates to work in groups of between 2 to 5 members;
- No more than two design candidates per group, each working on a different skill;
- If candidates select theatre design in this unit, they must select acting in the devised practical performance (controlled assessment);
- Externally assessed by a visiting examiner in April/May.

### External Assessment (AO1)

#### UNIT THREE (DR3) 20% Written Examination ( 50 marks: 40 UMS)

Candidates will sit a 1 ¼ hour written examination. They will be assessed on their ability to analyse **one** set text as an actor, designer and director.

Externally assessed in June

### 1.3 Changes to the specification for delivery in September 2009

This specification is now **unitised**. There are **three** units in total.

#### GCSE UNITS

UNIT	CHANGES	FURTHER GUIDANCE
<b>DR1 Devised Practical Performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This unit replaces the DR1, DR2 and DR3 components of the previous specification.</li> <li>• <b>This unit is now examined via controlled assessment.</b></li> <li>• The unit has <b>two</b> controlled assessment tasks.</li> <li>• The first task, DR1A, is a devised practical performance.</li> <li>• The second task, DR1B, is a devised performance report.</li> <li>• For DR1A pupils are expected to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ work in groups of between 2 and 5 pupils with an additional 2 pupils taking the technical option, if required, to create a devised performance;</li> <li>○ the performance must be based on one of the set themes outlined on page 16 of the specification;</li> <li>○ in addition to this theme, pupils must base their work on <b>either</b> the ideas/theories of a theatre practitioner <b>or</b> a genre of their choice.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• This unit replaces the DR2 component in the previous specification.</li> <li>• For DR1B pupils are expected to write a report of up to 1500 words analysing and evaluating the work they produced in the first task. The report should include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ details of the rationale for the performance;</li> <li>○ details on how initial ideas were developed;</li> <li>○ an evaluation of the individual and group performance;</li> <li>○ references to live theatre witnessed as part of the audience which has influenced the work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• This unit replaces the DR1 and DR3 components in the previous specification.</li> <li>• <b>Pupils may be assessed in either acting or a technical skill for both DR1 and DR2 units.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Further guidelines on DR1A <a href="#">can be found here.</a></p> <p>Further guidelines on DR1B <a href="#">can be found here.</a></p> <p>An exemplar DR1B report <a href="#">can be found here.</a></p>
<b>DR2 Performance from a Text</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This task is very similar to the DR5 unit in the old specification.</li> <li>• The assessment criteria are quite different, with five aspects marked out of 10.</li> <li>• As in the old specification this is externally assessed and is worth 20%.</li> <li>• <b>Pupils may be assessed in either acting or a technical skill for both DR1 and DR2 units.</b></li> </ul>	<p>Further guidelines on DR2 <a href="#">can be found here.</a></p>
<b>DR3 Written Examination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The set texts have changed (see page 10 of the specification).               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils must study and answer questions on <b>one set text only</b>.</li> <li>• Pupils are encouraged to work on the texts <b>practically in lessons</b>.</li> <li>• The first questions will require pupils to respond to the text as an actor or as a designer (i.e. questions on voice/movement, costume, lighting, sound, etc.).</li> <li>• The next questions will require pupils to consider how as an actor they would communicate a role, and how they would design a scene from the text.</li> <li>• The final questions will require pupils to analyse and evaluate their individual and the group DR2 performance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Further guidelines on DR3 <a href="#">can be found here.</a></p>

## 2. DELIVERING THE SPECIFICATION

### 2.1 Pathways through the specification

Each teacher will have their own individual approach to delivering this specification. It is important that teachers consider the links between each of the units. The work carried out in DR1A will influence the practical work on a text in DR2. This, in turn will influence their responses to questions on the set text in DR3, etc. The same links will apply to evaluative and analytical work in DR1B, DR2 and DR3.

The A-Z of Drama on page 33 of the specification will underpin the work that candidates will engage in during the course. Below are some explanations of the terms included in the A-Z. Wherever possible, teachers should include these in their general teaching. However, it should be pointed out that this list is not exhaustive, and that the whole list will not apply to every unit. The explanations provided below are for guidance only.

#### GCSE Drama Glossary

##### Section One: Conventions, forms, strategies, techniques

**Action narration** – a technique where a narrative is read out and performers react to the actions being described.

**Alter ego** – 'ego' means 'about self', therefore to alter one's ego is to have a second self, or opposite character. This is a technique sometimes also referred to as 'devil and angel'. Its most common form is where as someone acts out a character another person speaks their thoughts out loud. The purpose of the technique is to demonstrate how a character can be saying something quite different to what they are thinking. It is a useful exercise to explore subtext.

**Back story** – providing a prior history to a character or plot before the events in the play, scheme or drama being enacted.

**Chorus/chorus work** – a group of people working collectively using vocal and movement skills to communicate thoughts, feelings and ideas. The group may homogeneous or be broken down into sub-groups. In the manner of a Classical Greek Chorus, they may narrate a story, comment on the action and express an opinion.

**Collage** – putting together a 'patchwork' of dialogue, sounds and visual images from different contexts to provide an impressionistic presentation. For example, fragments of scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* could be selected and linked together and presented as a 'collage version'. The way in which the material is juxtaposed and presented can shed new meaning on the characters, their situation, the playwright's intentions and the language of the play.

**Communal voice** – a variation on chorus work where a group of performers speaks with 'one voice'. The voice of the chorus in this instance has a shared understanding and views about a situation or character.

**Conscience corridor (also known as 'conscience alley' or 'thought tunnel')** – two straight lines are formed and the individuals in each group face each other with a gap (or corridor; or alley; or tunnel) of about one metre between them. A person in a role which the whole group has prior knowledge of, walks through the corridor and hears thoughts or questions from each person either side of them as they move from one end to the other. The exercise is useful for character building and development.

**Flashback** – Enacting a moment from a character's remembered past. This can help to gain an understanding of a character's behaviour, emotions and attitude and provide some of the 'back story' (see above).

**Forum theatre** – a way of working developed by Augusto Boal. Participants sit or stand in a large circle to observe an improvisation usually started by two of their number. The improvisation will be based on a given situation or set of circumstances agreed by the group at the outset. At any point in the proceedings, the performers can stop the action and ask the rest of the group who are sitting around in a circle (The Forum) for help or advice about what to do or say next. The improvisation may continue from the forum can stop the action if they think what is happening is inappropriate or believe that the drama should be taken in a different direction. They can either offer advice, decide to take over from one of the performers or join in by taking on another role.

**Frame distancing** – a concept developed by Dorothy Heathcote to explore issues removed from the original incident or action. For example, rather than depicting the scene of an accident at the school gates the action is 'frame-distanced' by playing a scene at the gates the following day with bouquets of flowers placed where the accident took place.

**Freeze-frame** – during an improvisation or the playing of a scene, the instruction, 'freeze' is called out and the performers hold their positions at that moment. It has the effect of holding down the pause button on a DVD player. It is often confusingly used to mean 'still-image' or 'tableau' that are techniques used to consciously set up a 'stage picture' or a 'frozen image'.

**Hot-seating** – a technique to gain a deeper understanding of a character or role. An individual sits in a chair designated as the 'hot-seat'. The rest of the group asks the person in the 'hot-seat' relevant questions about their feelings, thoughts, actions or circumstances. The person in the 'hot-seat' answers the questions in role or as they think the character they are playing would answer.

**Improvisation** – To perform quickly in response to something, or to act without previous planning. A distinction is made between spontaneous and prepared improvisation. The former relating to making up a role as you go along and the latter relating to working within a previously agreed structure of ideas and roles.

**Narration** – dialogue designed to tell the story or provide accompanying information. Narration can accompany on-stage action or be presented in its own right.

**Narrator** – a role that functions like a story teller. A narrator can be used to describe the action, provide a commentary or give additional information. A narrator can be present on stage or be an off-stage or pre-recorded voice.

<p><b>Ranking</b> – an exercise used to explore the status of roles of character. Each performer 'ranks' their role within defined terms such as social standing or economic prosperity by assigning a number between one and ten. One is the lowest status and ten the highest. The exercise can be repeated at anytime to determine whether the status of the roles may have altered during the course of the drama.</p>
<p><b>Role reversal</b> – during an improvisation or rehearsal for a scene, the actors reverse the roles/characters they are portraying in order to gain a different view or understanding of their own role.</p>
<p><b>Role transfer</b> - one person begins acting-out a character or role which they pass on to another person to develop, imitate or alter.</p>
<p><b>Sculpting</b> – a technique used in conjunction with still-image work developed by Augusto Boal into <i>Image Theatre</i>. A group is divided into 'sculptors' and 'sculptees'. There are normally only one or two sculptors who create a sculpture by moving the 'sculptees' into different positions and stances in response to a stimulus or idea.</p>
<p><b>Soundscape</b> – using sounds made vocally to create an aural environment for a scene. Each individual creates a sound appropriate for a given circumstance to accompany or introduce a scene. For example, one person makes sea sounds, while another imitates the cry of a seagull to suggest the seaside. Repeated words and phrases overlapping each other can also be used to suggest a location or might be portrayed as sounds in a character's head as though from a nightmare or series of flashbacks.</p>
<p><b>Split screen</b> – a technique where two or more scenes take place in a performance space simultaneously, concurrently or alternating between each.</p>
<p><b>Tableau(x)</b> – a variation on <i>still-image</i> referring to a dramatic grouping of characters. A tableau may not necessarily be a still or frozen image as dialogue can be spoken and gestures used when it refers to the general 'stage picture' during a sequence in a scene. <i>Tableau vivant</i> is a particular instance where the performers are positioned to represent a picture or 'fresco' and props and costumes are often used as an integral part of the stage picture. It can also be used to describe a pause on the stage where all performers briefly freeze in position. This can typically be found at the end of scenes in Victorian melodramas.</p>
<p><b>Thoughts in the head or thought tracking</b> – this is an exercise that allows the inner thoughts of a character or role to be heard out loud. It is often used in conjunction with <i>freeze-frame</i> or <i>still-image</i> where a participant is asked say what they are thinking at that point in time.</p>
<p><b>Transporting a character</b> – this is a technique to explore how a character or role might react or behave in a different situation, location or time. For example, an intimate bedroom scene between two lovers is 'transported' to a crowded supermarket.</p>

## Section Two: Analytical, structural and theatrical terms

<p><b>Alienation</b> – a misleading translation of Brecht's expression <i>verfremdungseffekt</i> which refers to the devices and acting style used in epic theatre to distance the audience from having any sense that the theatrical experience is real.</p>
<p><b>Anti-climax</b> (see climax) – as a climax is meant to be where all things come together as a conclusion, an anti-climax is incomplete and therefore can be disappointing or unsatisfying.</p>
<p><b>Arena staging</b> – a form of theatre "in the round" where the audience surrounds the stage. Ancient Greek theatres were arena stages and the term suggests performances on a large scale.</p>
<p><b>Aside</b> – a dramatic convention, when an actor addresses the audience, while the other characters are unaware that they are doing so.</p>
<p><b>Audience</b> – the nature of the relationship between performers and an audience is subject to much theoretical debate. The main argument centres around the relative passivity of the audience in relation to the action on stage. In educational drama the audience can be fellow participants, whereas in a performance the audience takes a more observational stance. Some types of performance (e.g. <i>Street Theatre</i>) call for greater audience involvement. (See <i>Fourth wall</i> and <i>spect-actor</i>).</p>
<p><b>Auditorium</b> – the area within the theatre that accommodates the audience.</p>
<p><b>Caricature</b> – exaggerating the nature of a character usually for comic effect. This can involve emphasising a particular vocal or physical mannerism.</p>
<p><b>Character</b> – the person/persona that an actor wishes to convey. Is used interchangeably with role, but character tends to have a more specific meaning to refer to an actual person. A character, for example, could play a number of roles in a play such as parent, employer and friend as individuals do in real life. Also an actor can play a number of differing roles in a play each of which can be different characters. (See also <i>role</i>).</p>
<p><b>Climax</b> – the climax of a play is the moment when the threads of the plot or events in the play come together and are satisfactorily resolved. There is a sense in most plays or drama of a build-up in tension towards a climatic point, followed by some kind of resolution. (See <i>anti-climax</i>).</p>
<p><b>Composite setting</b> – a stage setting where several locations are represented in the same space and isolated or highlighted by lighting each area separately.</p>
<p><b>Dance drama</b> – a type of performance that is cross-over between dance and drama that involves using movement to music to express an idea or communicate a narrative.</p>
<p><b>Devising/devised work</b> – this is work that is principally developed by performers without working to a script written by a playwright in the conventional sense.</p>
<p><b>Dramatic irony</b> – where the audience knows more about a situation on stage than one of the characters in the drama.</p>

<p><b>Dramatic tension</b> – moments in a drama where the audience feels a heightened sense of anticipation about what is going to happen next.</p>
<p><b>End on staging</b> – when a space is divided in two, with the audience in one section facing the performance space in the other.</p>
<p><b>Epic theatre</b> – a reaction to dramatic theatre which is manifest in Brecht's later work. Features of epic theatre include, episodic scenes, a lack of tension, breaking the theatrical illusion through devices such as direct audience address, use of songs, projections and narration. Elements of epic theatre can be found in earlier plays such as the use of the Chorus in Greek Drama and the short episodic scenes in Shakespeare.</p>
<p><b>Fourth wall</b> – the notion that the stage is like a room with four walls with the audience looking in where one of the walls would be. Associated with naturalism in which there is a convention that the performers act as though the audience was not there.</p>
<p><b>Genre</b> – a category or type of drama which is defined by a particular set of conventions and norms. In critical theory, works are often judged by the extent to which they do or do not conform to a recognised pattern. Genres such as comedy, tragedy, musicals, melodrama and pantomime have readily identifiable features whereas terms such as naturalism, expressionism and epic are more elusive. Difficulties arise because a genre (e.g. naturalism) can be defined by its forms (e.g. naturalistic) which can be recognised by certain aesthetic elements (i.e. it has a naturalistic style). (See also <i>style</i>).</p>
<p><b>Monologue</b> – literally means one person speaking. It is a genre in its own right, e.g. <i>Shirley Valentine</i>, but it can also be a speech enacted by one character alone on stage in other genres. Dialogue spoken by a <b>Narrator</b> can take the form of a monologue and a <b>soliloquy</b> is a particular type of monologue that involves a character speaking their inner thoughts out loud to the audience.</p>
<p><b>Naturalism</b> – a genre that attempts to replicate nature and present events and characters on stage as though they are from real life. Not always distinguishable from <i>realism</i>, it attempts to hold a mirror up to nature and give the illusion of characters as actual people in real-life situations using everyday language. (See also <i>realism</i>). As an artistic movement, <i>naturalism</i> originated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century whereas <i>realism</i> originated earlier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Naturalism is said to be less concerned with authenticity than realism.</p>
<p><b>Physical theatre</b> – a theatre form and a performance style that emphasises and exaggerates the movement and gestural qualities of performance. It is a form very close to contemporary dance and requires performers to be fit and agile. It can also extend to mask work, mime and use elements of circus skills. Companies like <i>DV8</i>, <i>Trestle</i> and <i>Complicite</i> are major exponents of this type of work.</p>
<p><b>Promenade staging</b> – the audience moves around to different areas or stages in a performance space. Medieval mystery play performed on carts and wagons are an early example of this.</p>
<p><b>Proscenium</b> – the permanent or semi-permanent wall dividing the audience from the stage. The opening in this wall frames the stage, hence the description, <i>proscenium arch</i>.</p>

**Realism** – a genre that sets out to portray everyday life as faithfully as possible. It has its origins in the visual arts during the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It requires an approach to acting that depicts natural behaviour and speech and is anti-illusory in character. In practice, *realism* and *naturalism* are used interchangeably but the former is said to be more concerned with detail and aims to be closer to real life than naturalism. (See also *naturalism*).

**Style** – this describes the aesthetic quality of a drama and is often indistinguishable from *genre* and *form*. For a drama to be recognisable in a particular genre, it has to be presented in a way which has the hallmarks of that genre. Style refers to the way the actors are performing, the visual characteristics of the setting and costumes and the choice of particular conventions. Confusingly, a drama belonging to one genre (e.g. naturalism) can be presented in different styles (for example, the acting may be in a naturalistic style but the stage design can be in an abstract style).

**Subtext** – in narrative terms this refers to a secondary plot or storyline. In terms of acting and character analysis it refers to the idea that there are other meanings below the surface of which is actually being said and done.

**Suspension of disbelief** – the idea that when an audience is watching a drama it is willing to accept that what is happening on stage (or on film) is real.

**Theatre in Education (TIE)** – a movement that developed in the 1960's that presented work in educational settings which had the principal purpose to use theatre to teach an audience about a particular issue, idea or theme. It often involved the audience as participants in the drama.

**Theatre-in-the-round** – the type of performance space where the audience surrounds the acting space on all sides.

**Thrust staging** – where the audience is usually on three sides of a performance space.

**Traverse** – where the performance space has the audience on either side.

## 2.2 Examples of Approaches

The following is a suggested overview of how the two year course could be set out.

YEAR 10		
TERM	WEEK	CONTENT
1	1 - 14	INTRODUCTION TO DEVISING END OF TERM INTERNAL ASSESSMENT = MINI DEvised PROJECT
2	1 - 7	GENRE OR PRACTITIONER END OF HALF TERM = ASSESSMENT OF UNDERSTANDING OF GERNRE/PRACTITIONER THROUGH PRACTICAL PERFORMANCE (including a mini written evaluation – controlled in classroom over 1 hour)
2	8 - 14	Study of set text – see suggested areas of study.
3	1 - 7	Mini scripted performance approximately 5 mins. per 2 candidates. Internal assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Rehearsed</li> <li>◆ Costumed</li> <li>◆ Technical elements</li> <li>◆ Audience</li> </ul>
3	8 -16	Preparation for written paper – section B. Revisit any areas not covered / introduce new genre or practitioner.

<b>YEAR 11</b>		
<b>TERM</b>	<b>WEEK</b>	<b>CONTENT</b>
1	1 - 16	DEvised PROJECT – BASED ON THEME SET BY WJEC. FORMAL ASSESSMENT AT END OF TERM
2	1 - 2	WRITTEN REPORT
2	3 - 7	PRACTICAL EXPLORATION IN PREPARATION FOR THE PERFORMANCE FROM A SET TEXT.
2	8 - 16	RE- CAP SET TEXT. PREPARATION FOR PRACTICAL EXAM. PREPARATION FOR SECTION B WRITTEN PAPER

## **3. SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS**

The resources indicated below may assist you in teaching the GCSE Drama specification. The resources are suggested and the list is not definitive. If you wish to recommend some resources that you have found useful, please let the subject officer at WJEC know and we will add them to this guide. INSET courses will be organised periodically, usually in the autumn term to support teachers in delivering the specification and to provide feedback on the examination process. The INSET course booklet will be available via your INSET coordinator in school or you can access the list of courses via the Professional Development link on [www.wjec.co.uk/professionaldevelopment](http://www.wjec.co.uk/professionaldevelopment). You can also apply for courses using the online form.

Further advice and support can be offered by the subject team at WJEC. Catherine Webster (Subject Officer: 029 2026 5316 [catherine.webster@wjec.co.uk](mailto:catherine.webster@wjec.co.uk)) and Sara Evans/Catrin Budd (Subject Support Officer: 029 2026 5142 [sara.evans@wjec.co.uk](mailto:sara.evans@wjec.co.uk)/[catrin.budd@wjec.co.uk](mailto:catrin.budd@wjec.co.uk)).

### **3.1 Generic Resources for the Specification as a whole**

#### **3.1.1 Suggested textbooks include:**

*The GCSE Drama Coursebook* by Andy Kempe (Nelson Thornes: ISBN: 978-0748767731)

*GCSE Bitesize Drama* by Andy Kempe, Chloe Newman, Bev Roblin (BBC Active: ISBN 978-0563515623 )

*Teaching Classroom Drama and Theatre: Practical Projects for Secondary Schools* by Martin Lewis, John Rainer (Routledge: ISBN 978-0415319089)

*Performance Power: Extracts for Performance in GCSE Drama* by Joss Bennathan (Heinemann Educational Publishers: ISBN 978-0435233327)

*The GCSE Drama Coursebook* by Andy Kempe (Nelson Thornes Ltd. ISBN: 978-0748724758)

*Success in GCSE Drama* by Phil Parker and Craig Boardman (Folens: ISBN 9781843037880)

#### **3.1.2 General Websites**

[www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk) <http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/drama/>

<http://www.free-teaching-resources.co.uk/drama.shtml>

<http://www.dramateachers.co.uk/>

<http://www.thevirtualdramastudio.co.uk/>

[http://www.rhinegold.co.uk/magazines/magazines\\_catalogue.asp?css=1&m=1&id=94](http://www.rhinegold.co.uk/magazines/magazines_catalogue.asp?css=1&m=1&id=94)

## 4. UNIT GUIDES

### 4.1 DR1 Devised Practical Performance

#### 4.1.1 DR1A: Devised Performance

Here are some examples of possible units of work to cover the devised practical performance requirements. Each unit includes key theatrical elements and a suggested assessment project.

These units will provide the student with a 'tool box' of techniques and ideas which will form the basis for their final Devised Practical Performance.

Given the broad cross section of pupils studying Drama at GCSE the units lend themselves to further development or curtailment. Each teacher will tailor the units to suit the requirements of the group and candidates prior knowledge e.g. in the MUSICAL THEATRE unit pupils could write a review or the production could be discussed orally in class.

#### Introduction to DEVISING

The following areas should be explored according to previous knowledge and skills of group:

##### Devising techniques:

- Monologues
- Voice over
- Freeze frames
- Flashbacks
- Narrator
- Choral work
- Masks

##### Structure

- Plot (Beginning, middle, end)
- Message to audience
- Moving time forward
- Use of episodes
- Climax
- Characters function
- Dramatic pause
- Theatricality
- Narrative
- Entrance and exits

### **Character**

- Motivation
- Interaction
- Voice
- Movement
- Performance

### **Technical aspects**

- Lighting enhancing performance and structure
- Sound – atmosphere and linking scenes
- Choice of acting area
  - (i) ground plans for various stages
  - (ii) strengths and weaknesses
  - (iii) experience from actor / audience
- Style of production
  - (i) set
  - (ii) costume
  - (iii) masks
  - (iv) make up

### **Mini Devising Project**

Using all the techniques studied during the term the students should be given a mini project that will be assessed at the end of the term. The stimulus could be in the same form as the themes set by the WJEC e.g. a picture, words from a song, a quotation.

Following the performance the students could complete a mini written report concentrating on a few basic elements e.g. content, technical elements and evaluation of performance.

## BRECHT

### Introduction

Why do we study Brecht?

What was Brecht's contribution to the development of the theatre?

Emotion v Logic / Mind v Heart

### Techniques to be explored and understood

- Episodic Nature
- Multi role
- Direct address to audience
- Narrator
- Symbolism to suggest location
- Shock tactics
- Protest: Placards / Songs / Newspapers
- Screen and Power points
- Political message – relevant to audience (helping the decision process)

### Mini project

Using all the Brechtian techniques studied in the unit the students should devise a performance using the following stimulus:

**'Because of the state of society, the Government are going to introduce a new regulation that all 16 year olds must be in the house by 9.00p.m.'**

## Stanislavski

### Introduction

Why do we study Stanislavski?

What was Stanislavski's contribution to the development of the theatre?

Naturalism – foundation for the modern Western Theatre

### Techniques to be explored

- Given circumstances
- Emotional memory
- Imagination / creating the life of the character
- Animal work on character
- Costume and influence
- Objective
- Motivation

### **Practical skills to be explored**

- Magic 'if'
- Monologues
- Improvisation
- Alter ego
- Hot seating
- Sub-text
- Voice for character
- Physicality
  - (i) walk
  - (ii) tempo of character
  - (iii) gesture

### **Mini Project**

Using a series of monologues as a starting point, create a devised piece based on a Stanislavskian approach to character.

## **Musical Theatre**

### **Introduction**

What is musical theatre?

- A form of theatre combining music, songs, spoken dialogue and dance.
- The emotional content of the piece, humour, love anger etc is communicated through the words, music, movement and technical aspects of the entertainment as an integrated whole.

This unit provides an ideal opportunity for students to view live performance from professional theatre, school productions or DVDs of musical as a starting point for discussion.

### **Techniques to be explored**

- Structure of musical theatre.
- Songs and dialogue e.g. Blood Brothers, High School Musical
- How movement and dance contribute to the overall messages and themes e.g. West Side Story, Jekyll and Hyde
- Characterization.
- The differences between American and British musicals e.g. Blood Brothers Grease.
- How technical aspects contribute to musical theatre e.g. Lighting, sets, costume and Make up.

**Practical work to be explored**

- Practical Work based on a song with a specific function e.g. Groups take a song, e.g. Children's Games from Blood Brothers and structure a devised piece using appropriate movement, dialogue and the specified song.
- Character/Movement work based on a specified song e.g. Officer Krupke from West Side story.
- Using the Internet to find relevant sets and costumes create a mood board to show the differences between the various musicals.

**Mini project**

The manager of your local theatre has asked your group to devise a short piece of musical theatre.

Select two songs from any genre and devise a piece of musical theatre using your own movement, dialogue and the selected songs.

(Many modern bands have songs which have been developed into a piece of modern musical theatre e.g. Abba's Mama Mia, Queen's We will rock you. Allow students to experiment with songs they are familiar with and genres, not necessary from conventional musical theatre, they are comfortable with.

N.B If this unit is selected; students would be expected to sing. Live music is not a requirement and students could use a backing track, CD, mini disk etc.

**Theatre in Education****Introduction**

What is theatre in education?

- Theatre in education quite simply starts with an educational topic and builds a show around it.

As with musical theatre exploration of this genre initially as a member of an audience provides the ideal starting point. A study of this genre also provides the ideal opportunity to view the work of the school's regional T.I.E Company.

**Techniques to be explored**

- Episodic nature of the play.
- Use of Narrator.
- Multi-role
- Characters which are stereotypical or caricatures in order to make an immediate point to the audience.
- Target audience/audience participation
- Monologues.
- Song and Dance.
- Visual technical elements to emphasise message e.g. power points, placards.
- Use of Basic sets and technical elements.
- Reliance on symbolism

### Mini Project

The head teacher at your school is becoming fed up with the amount of litter around the school. He has asked your GCSE drama group to devise a TIE project with a strong anti litter message. The target audience is the new year 7 arriving in September. The performance will be shown during their first week in school and the aim of the project is to make them aware of the anti-social nature of litter and the environmental impact.

## Physical Theatre

### What is physical Theatre?

#### Introduction

- Physical Theatre is a general term used to describe any type of performance that pursues story telling through primarily physical means.
- Physical theatre is the craft of building theatre through physical actions, characterization and stage composition.

### Techniques to be explored

- Physicality of objects. E.g. using the story of Red Riding Hood as a starting point
- Use of sound/instruments
- Use of objects in a symbolic manner e.g. sticks
- Animals e.g. Two teenagers discussing in a rather nasty manner another girl take on the characteristics of two cats. Opening of the play *Metamorphosis* by Stephen Berkoff
- Use of Ritual.
- Masks.
- Fast Forward/Slow motion
- Using a piece of dialogue from a play and presenting it as a piece of movement in order to convey meaning e.g. the haunting of Lorna by the shadows in "Walking with Shadows"  
The moment Biff discovers Willy is unfaithful to his mother in *Death of a Salesman*.
  - Use of puppets and dolls e.g. Dr Kovaks example.
  - Dream sequences
  - Disjointed structure.

### Mini Devising Project

The local branch of the Samaritans has asked your drama group to prepare a piece of theatre to use in a publicity evening to raise funds. Using a series of pictures on the theme of "loneliness" as a stimulus, create a piece of physical theatre.

#### 4.1.2 DA1A: Devised Performance: General Tips and Advice

As teachers you are aware of how important collaborative group work is in Drama. In the initial stages of working closely within groups, any number of improvisation exercises should be used to develop rapport and a suitably constructive working atmosphere in lessons.

Once pupils are put in their groups for this task, it is worth each group undertaking an analysis of the group members' knowledge and experience of appropriate skills and discovering which skills they wish to develop. The following grid sheet might be used:

NAME	MUSIC SKILLS	DANCE/ MOVEMENT	TECH SKILLS	PERFORM?	ADDITIONAL SKILLS	WISH TO DEVELOP
Pupil 1	sing	No	props	Yes	Script writing	acting
Pupil 2	No	No	LX/FX	No	Craft skills	LX/FX
Pupil 3	Piano	No	None	Yes	None	Acting
Pupil 4	Guitar	Yes	FX	Yes	Circus skills	Movement
Pupil 5	None	No	Costume	Don't mind	Make up	Tech skills
Pupil 6	Sing and guitar/piano	Yes	None	Yes	Art	Acting

Once the strengths and areas for development in each group have been established pupils should then move on to making decisions on which theme they wish to explore and if they are going to base their work on a practitioner or a genre. It is of course possible to produce work based on a practitioner and a genre, as at times these are inextricably linked.

Wherever possible, pupils should work on devising by simply 'playing' about to see where the work leads. From this, various possibilities may arise which will form the basis of their developmental work.

Once the general ideas have been discussed in the group, perhaps each group can use a large piece of paper for brainstorming, then pupils could carry out some individual research. Each pupil could bring in some relevant documentation on what they feel would be relevant for the performance, including newspaper cuttings, video, extracts from books, pamphlets, etc.

Once individual work has been completed, the group will then need to work collaboratively to narrow down the choices on the proposed ideas. Pupils should be encouraged to start practical experimentation immediately and not to spend too much time discussing possibilities. One successful method of approaching this is for each pair of pupils to devise a short piece based on their choice of material. Each pair could then present their work to the others in the group to stimulate further ideas.

All thoughts and ideas should be logged at these early stages (see next section) in both group and individual files.

Another important early step is for each group to allocate tasks to different group members. These tasks may include research, technical elements, script development, direction, etc. Although many of the tasks will involve the whole group, it is advisable for one person to coordinate the various elements in each area.

Pupils should be encouraged when working on the process of developing their devised piece to consider three main areas:

- Research;
- Setting targets;
- Developing the piece.

Research could take various forms as in:

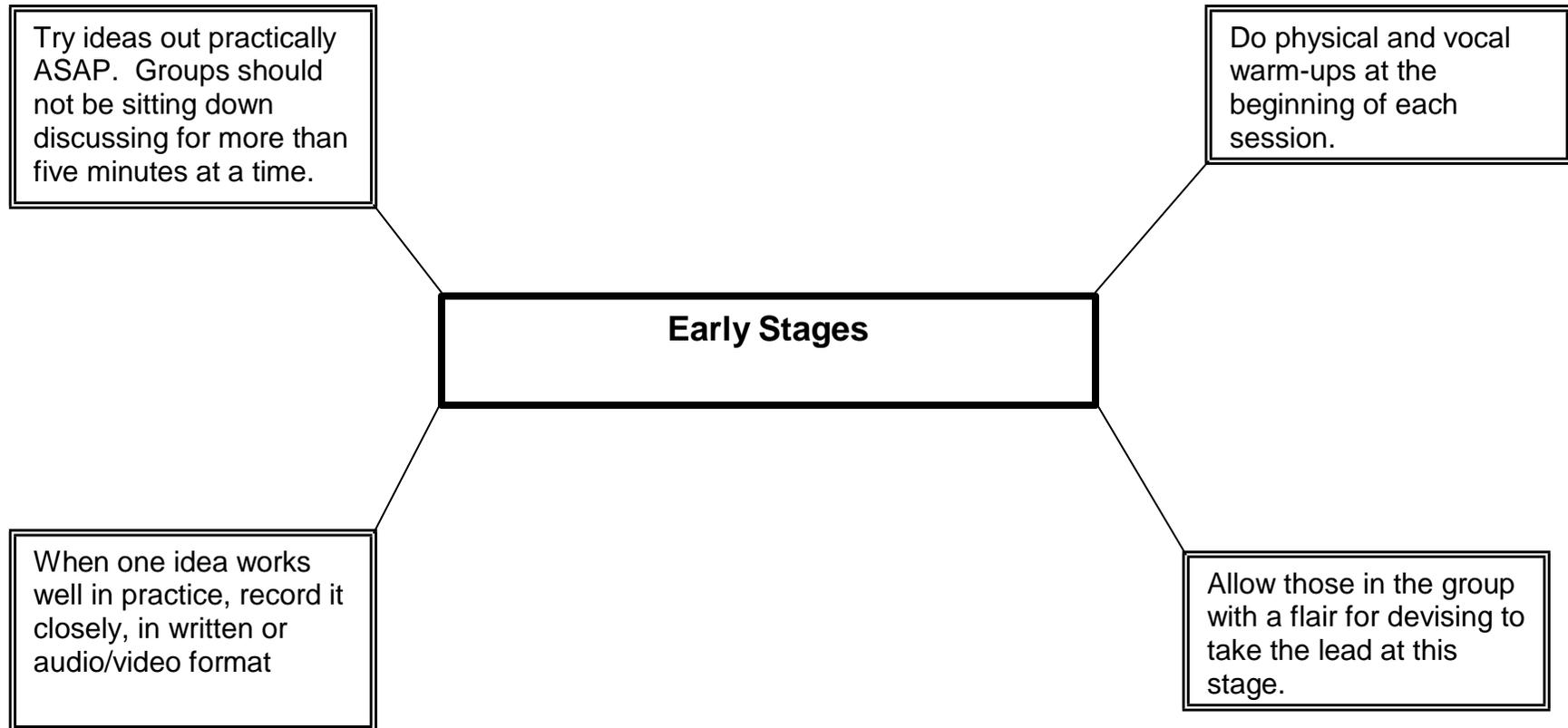
<b>Historical</b>	<b>Thematic</b>	<b>Literary</b>
Textbooks	Interviews	Novels
Diaries and biographies	Pamphlets	Poems
Novels/poetry/films	Television or film documentaries	Film and television adaptations
Newspaper articles	Newspaper articles	Paintings
Paintings		Photographs

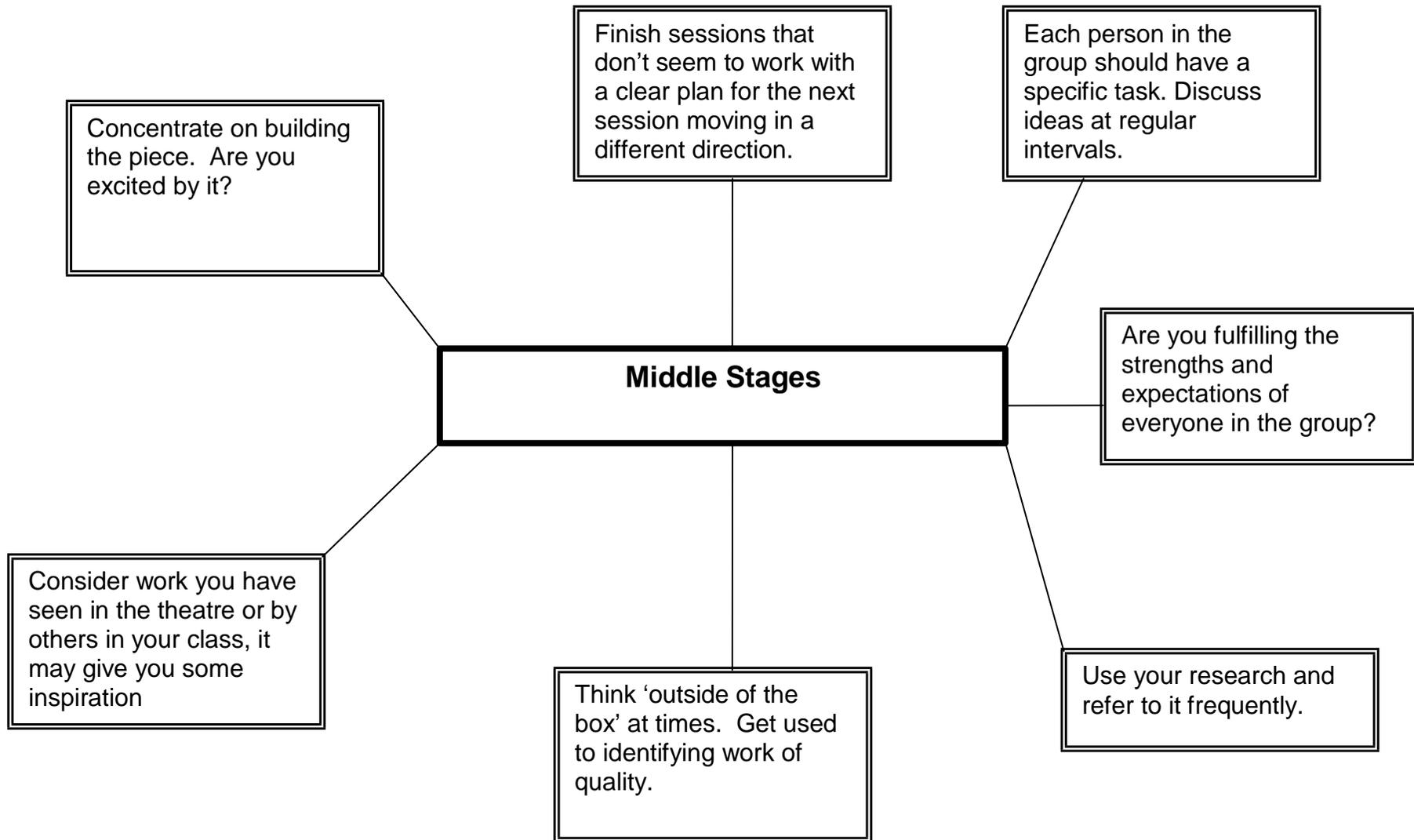
Setting targets is essential when pupils are devising. They should be advised to always work backwards from the date of the performance. Encourage pupils to build in dates for dress runs and tech rehearsals, leaving time for pre-tech rehearsal also. Of course, before the pre-technical rehearsal, time must be set aside to allow for a run through of the piece, without stopping, at least three times.

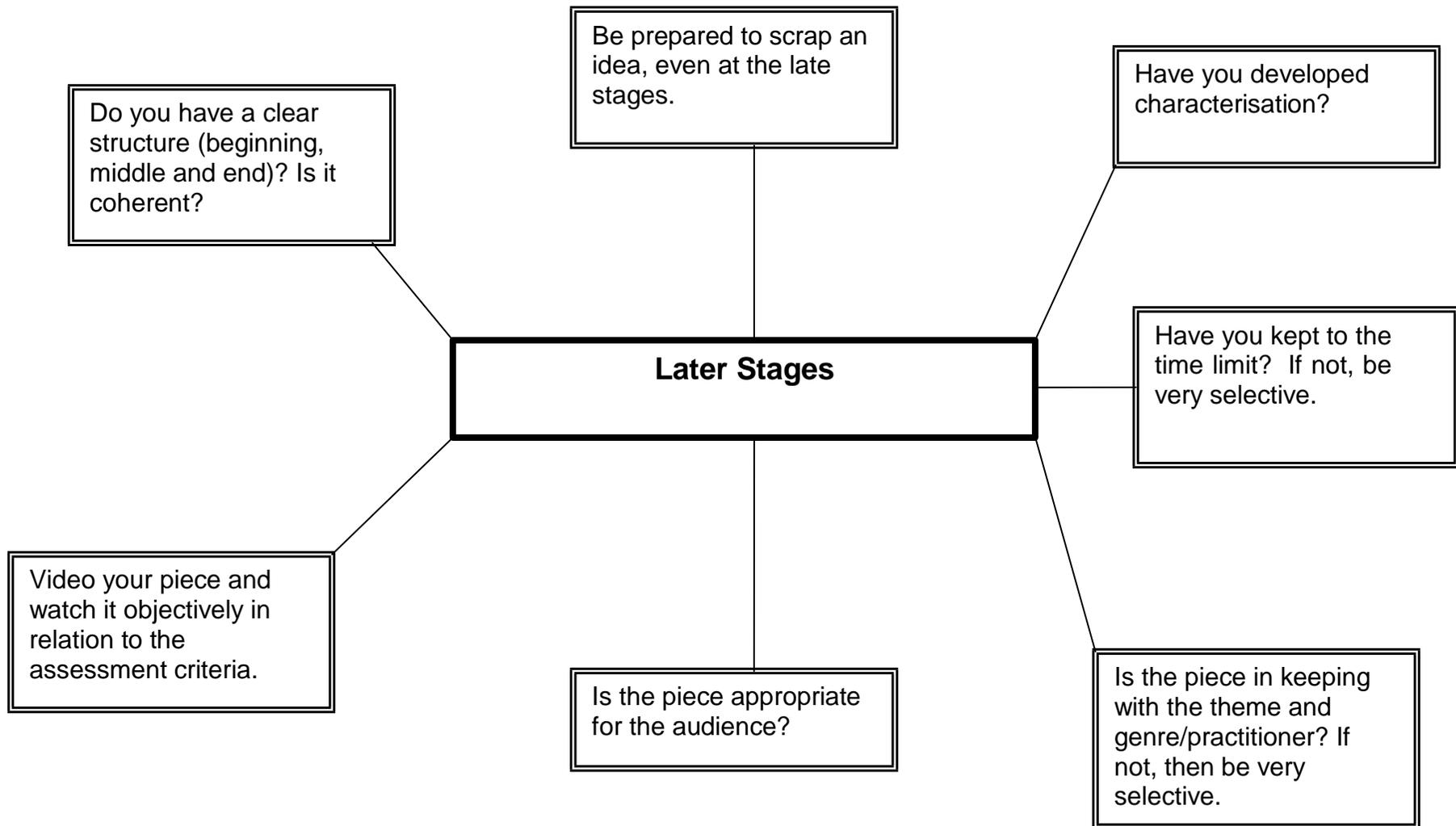
Pupils might consider dividing the rehearsal time according to the length of the piece. For example, a 20 minute piece over seven weeks remaining rehearsal time could allow approximately one week for devising and rehearsing each five minutes of the piece. This would then leave two weeks for polishing and completing run-throughs with the final week on technical and dress runs.

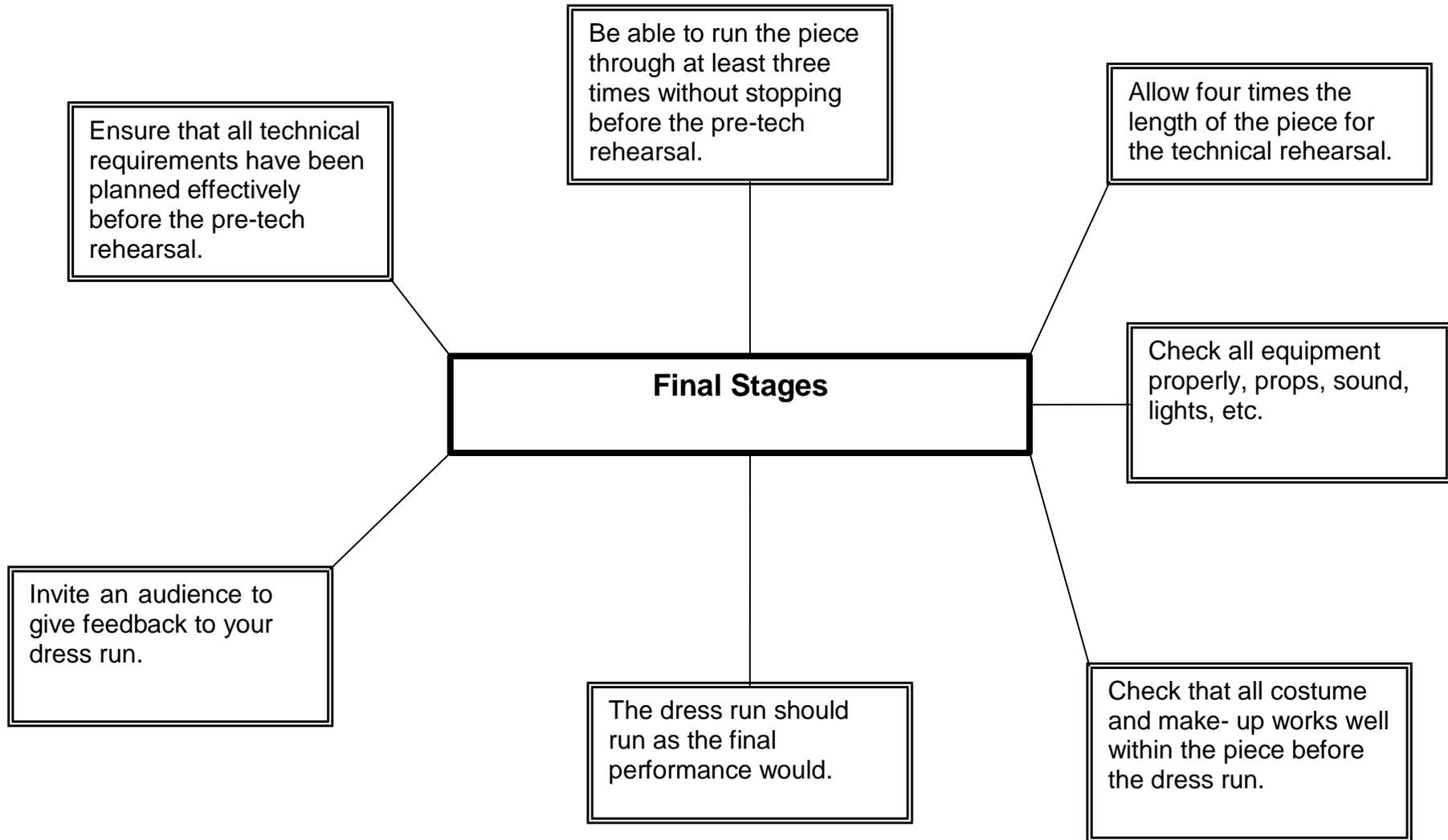
The development of the piece will take a lot of thought and planning. All groups will approach this differently and teachers will have their own way of getting the best out of their pupils.

In general terms, there will be common approaches which are demonstrated on the flow charts on the following pages:









#### 4.1.2 DR1B: Devised Performance Report

As stated in the previous section, pupils should be encouraged to keep both individual and group records of the devising process, which not only informs the practical element but will also prove invaluable when writing the report.

An example of a working record which pupils can use during the performance can be [found here \(click here to see attachment below\)](#). It must be noted that pupils do not have to use this guide but as teachers it is advisable for you to provide your pupils with some framework to capture their thoughts and processes whilst they are devising. Pupils are allowed to refer to their notes when compiling their final report under your **formal supervision**.

As stated previously, pupils should evaluate and analyse their work in progress as part of their drama activities. This can be done both orally and in written format at various stages during the course.

The final report, which should not be more than 1500 words in length must be completed under the formal supervision of the teacher. The whole process of writing the report should not take longer than **five hours**. It is recommended that this is taken over a series of lessons with pupils focusing on one area at a time.

Pupils should aim to write under the following three headings, as detailed on page 23 of the specification:

- Rationale
- Development
- Performance

To ensure adequate coverage of the assessment objectives in line with the word count, pupils should aim to write approximately 375 words on the rationale and performance sections and 750 words on the development section.

As well as commenting on the performance and process of the individual and the group, candidates are encouraged to write about their experiences of live theatre and how they have influenced their own work and that of the group.

An example of a DR1 Devised Performance Report [can be found here](#).

#### Suggested Resources:

##### Books

*Stanislavski Through Practice* (Jeni Whittaker: Drama Works)

*Brecht Through Practice* (Jeni Whittaker Drama Works)

*Artaud Through Practice* Jeni Whittaker (Drama Works)

*Styltasters 1* (Jeni Whittaker Drama Works)

*Styltasters 2* Jeni Whittaker (Drama Works)

**Websites:**

<http://www.dramaworks.co.uk/index.html>

There are many companies and directors which use physical theatre to great effect e.g. Theatre Complicity, Volcano , DV8, Steven Berkoff . It is highly recommended that pupils are given the opportunity to watch a piece of live theatre. However, there are examples available on YouTube (subject to individual's teacher censorship).

#### **4.2DR2 Performance from a Text**

Much of the advice and guidance offered on the devised practical performance (task one, DR1A) can be repeated when preparing pupils for the DR2 unit.

You will find some interesting ideas on how to work with a script by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.teachit.co.uk/attachments/7325.pdf>

Text choice is very important here. Below you will find some examples of scenes for various different combinations.

KEY : M= Male; F = Female

<b>1M/ 1F</b>	<b>2F</b>	<b>2M</b>	<b>3F</b>	<b>variations</b>	<b>4F</b>	<b>5F</b>
September in the Rain (John Godber)	Porch [Natural Disasters] (Jack Heffner)	Duck Variations (David Mamet)	The Dance (Mary Krell-Oishi)	Blood Brothers (Willy Russell)	Relics (David Campton)	Steel Magnolias (Robert Harling)
Twister [Natural Disasters] (Jack Heffner)	Poof (Lyn Nottage)	The Odd Couple (Neil Simon)	Top Girls (Caryl Churchill)	<b>4M</b> Stags and Hens (Willy Russell)	Children's Hour (Lillian Hellman)	Laundry Girls (Bill Owen)
The Park Bench (Robert Mauro)	Effie's Burning (Valerie Windsor)	Divorce (Mary Krell-Oishi)	<b>2M/ 1F</b> Embodiment (Jeremy Hylton Davies)	<b>Variations</b> Abigail's Party (Mike Leigh)	Stags and Hens (Willy Russell)	Dancing at Lughnasa (Friel)
Barefoot in the Park (Neil Simon)	One Sunday Afternoon (James Hagan)	Journey's End (R.C.Sherriff)	<b>2F/ 1M</b> Seagulls (Caryl Churchill)	<b>2M/ 2F</b> Norman Conquests (Ayckbourn)	My Mother Said I Never Should (Charlotte Keatley)	
The Diary of Adrian Mole (Sue Townsend)	Skirmishes (Catherine Hayes)	Of Mice and Men (John Steinbeck)	<b>2M/ 1F</b> Squirrels (Mamet)	<b>3M/ 2F</b> Blue Remembered Hills (Dennis Potter)		
Legalities (Mary Krell-Oishi)	Miss Perfect (Mary Krell-Oishi)	All My Sons (Miller)	<b>4M</b> Bouncers (Godber)	<b>2F/ 1M</b> Night School (Pinter)		
Saint Joan (G.B. Shaw)	Early Blight (Jean McConnell)	Dog Accident (James Saunders)	<b>Various</b> Glass Menagerie (Williams)	<b>2F/ 2M</b> Betrayal (Pinter)		
All My Sons (Arthur Miller)	The Waiting Room (Wendy St John Maule)	True West (Sam Sheppard)	<b>Various</b> All's Fair (Frank Vickery)	<b>Various</b> Royal Hunt of the Sun (Peter Shafer)		
Educating Rita (Willy Russell)	Machinal (Sophie Treadwell)	House of America (Ed Thomas)	<b>Various</b> A Streetcar Named Desire (Williams)			
The Dolls House (Ibsen)	My Sister in the House (Wendy Kesselman)	Flowers of the Dead Sea (Ed Thomas)				
Love is a Many Splendoured Thing (Godber)	Wait Until Dark (Frederick Knott)	Dumb Waiter (Pinter)				
The Corn is Green (Emlyn Williams)	Tartuffe (Moliere)	A Night Out (Pinter)				
Cat On a Hot Tin Roof (T. Williams)	Kindertransport (Diane Samuels)	Zoo Story (Albee)				
	A Night Under Canvas (Lisa Hunt)	Up and Under (Godbee)				
	The Ark (Helen Griffin)					
	Far Away (Caryl Churchill)					
	Shout Across the River (Poliakoff)					
	City Sugar (Poliakoff)					
	Hedda Gabler (Ibsen)					
	The Importance of Being Earnest (Wilde)					
	With All my Love I Hate You (Linda Marchall)					
	Antigone (Anouilh)					
	Memory of Water (Sheilagh Devonlad)					

### 4.3DR3 Written Examination

#### Practical Approaches to the Set Text

#### READ THE TEXT ALOUD IN CLASS

Small group activity:  
Imagine that the chosen text is going to be made into a film. Using key episodes from the play, improvise a film trailer.

Character exploration through improvisation off text e.g. Imagine that Rhys gets to the cliff at the end of the play, improvise the dialogue between Elin and Rhys.

Exploration of specific sections through practical work – concentrating on key acting skills e.g. how an actor might use voice, movement, facial expressions to portray the character in a particular scene.

Create ground plans for a suitable set on various stages. Create a model 3D set for the set text.

Practical exploration of theatrical techniques used in the text e.g. dolls, flashbacks, direct address etc.

Create a mood board for costume design for various characters / whole play.

Find sound effects / atmospheric music for specific scenes.

Use genre / practitioner ideas to enhance the understanding of the text – working hand in hand with devising.

There are several resources on the internet that may help with the set texts. Some of them are included below:

**Death of a Salesman:** <http://www.teachit.co.uk/index.asp?CurrMenu=20&T=352#352>

**Sparkleshark:**

[http://kentaylor.co.uk/die/DramaUKFileArchive/home/sow\\_files/Sparkleshark\\_Y8.doc](http://kentaylor.co.uk/die/DramaUKFileArchive/home/sow_files/Sparkleshark_Y8.doc)

**Stone Cold:**

<http://www.kentaylor.co.uk/die/materials/docs/lessons/yr10/andykempe/stonecold.pdf>

**Dr Korczak's Example:**

[http://www.fairplaypress.co.uk/resources/dr\\_k\\_resources.pdf](http://www.fairplaypress.co.uk/resources/dr_k_resources.pdf)

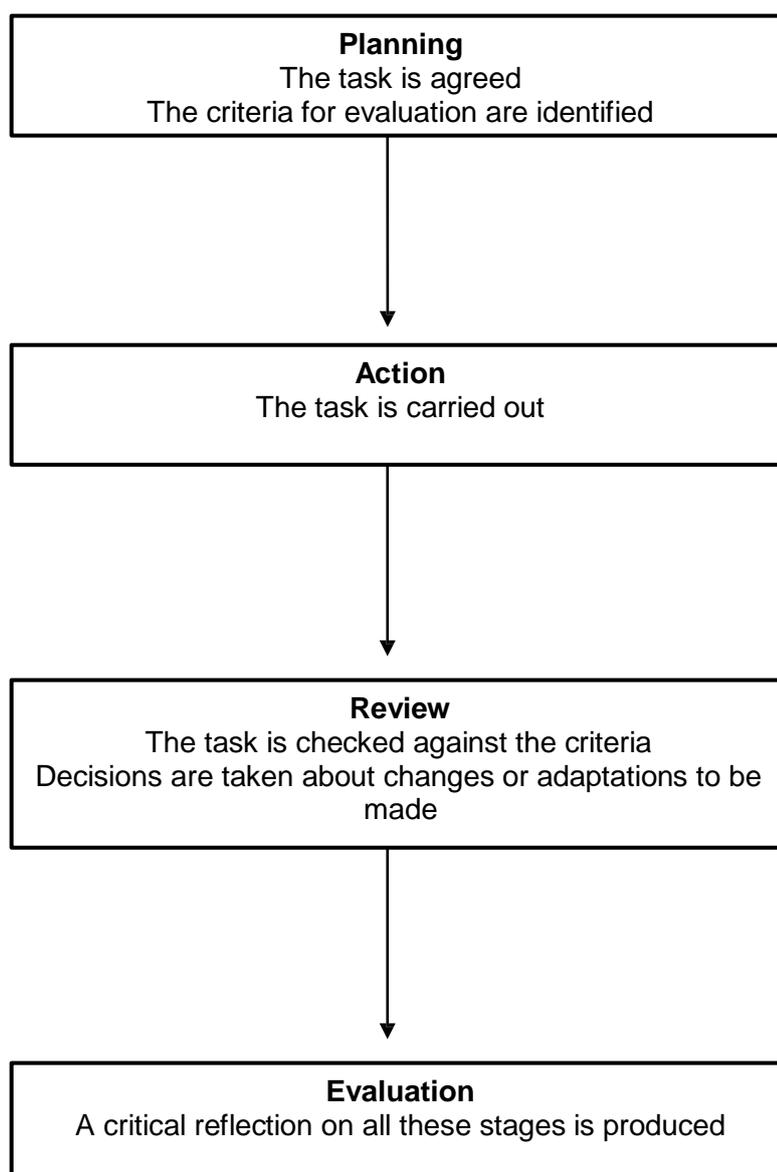
[http://www.fairplaypress.co.uk/resources/dr\\_k\\_cards1.pdf](http://www.fairplaypress.co.uk/resources/dr_k_cards1.pdf)

[http://www.fairplaypress.co.uk/resources/dr\\_k\\_cards2.pdf](http://www.fairplaypress.co.uk/resources/dr_k_cards2.pdf)

#### 4.4 DR3 Written Evaluation

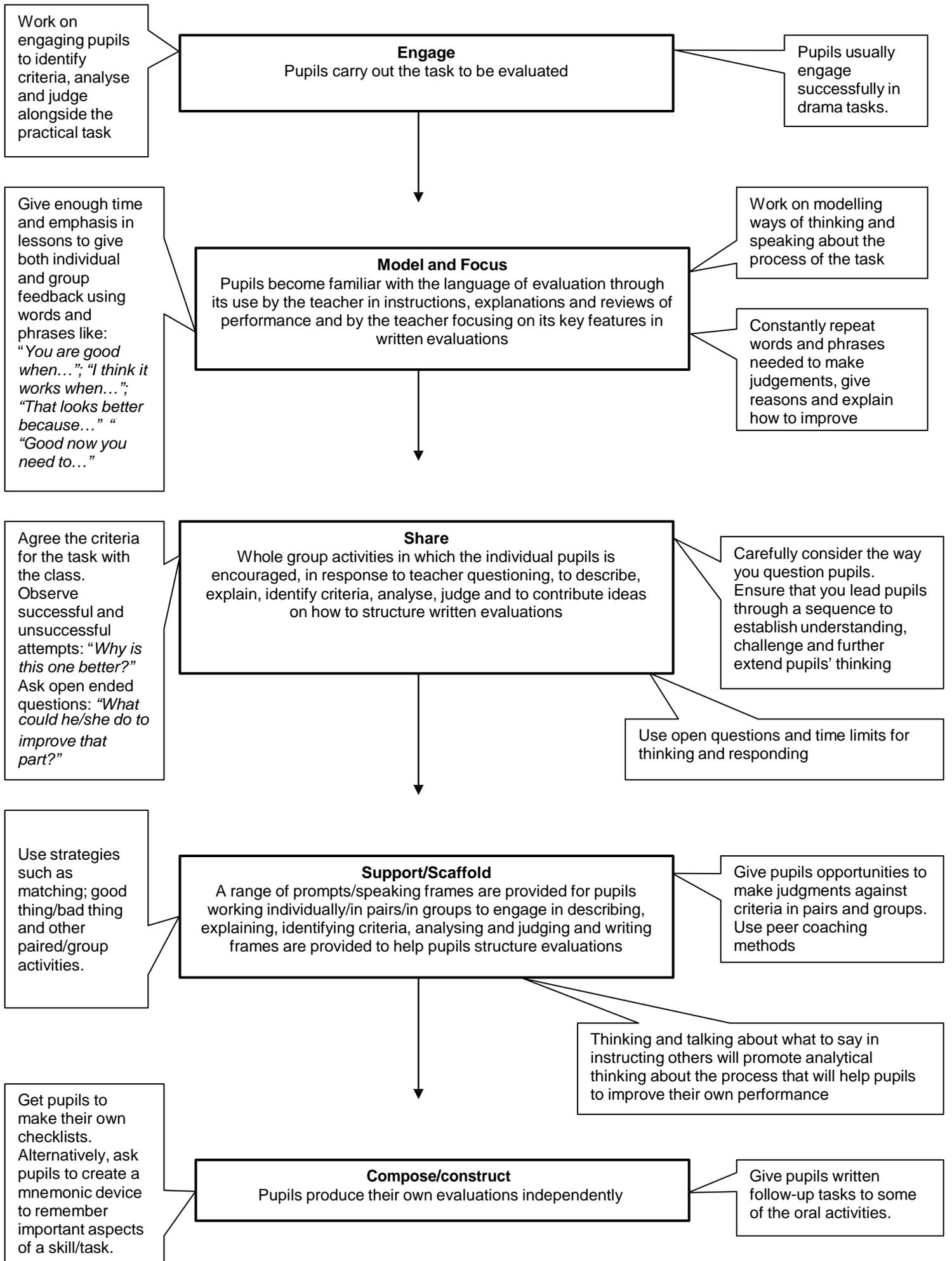
It is important to build up pupils' evaluation skills during their GCSE course. This assists them in improving their own work, problem solving, decision making, etc. Developing pupils' evaluation skills should form part of every drama lesson and can be developed through formative assessment, *Assessment for Learning* and critical thinking techniques in the classroom.

It is important to highlight to pupils the evaluation process which is demonstrated on the flowchart below:



As teachers, we know how important a process evaluation is and how it should form part of our day to day teaching, both formally and informally.

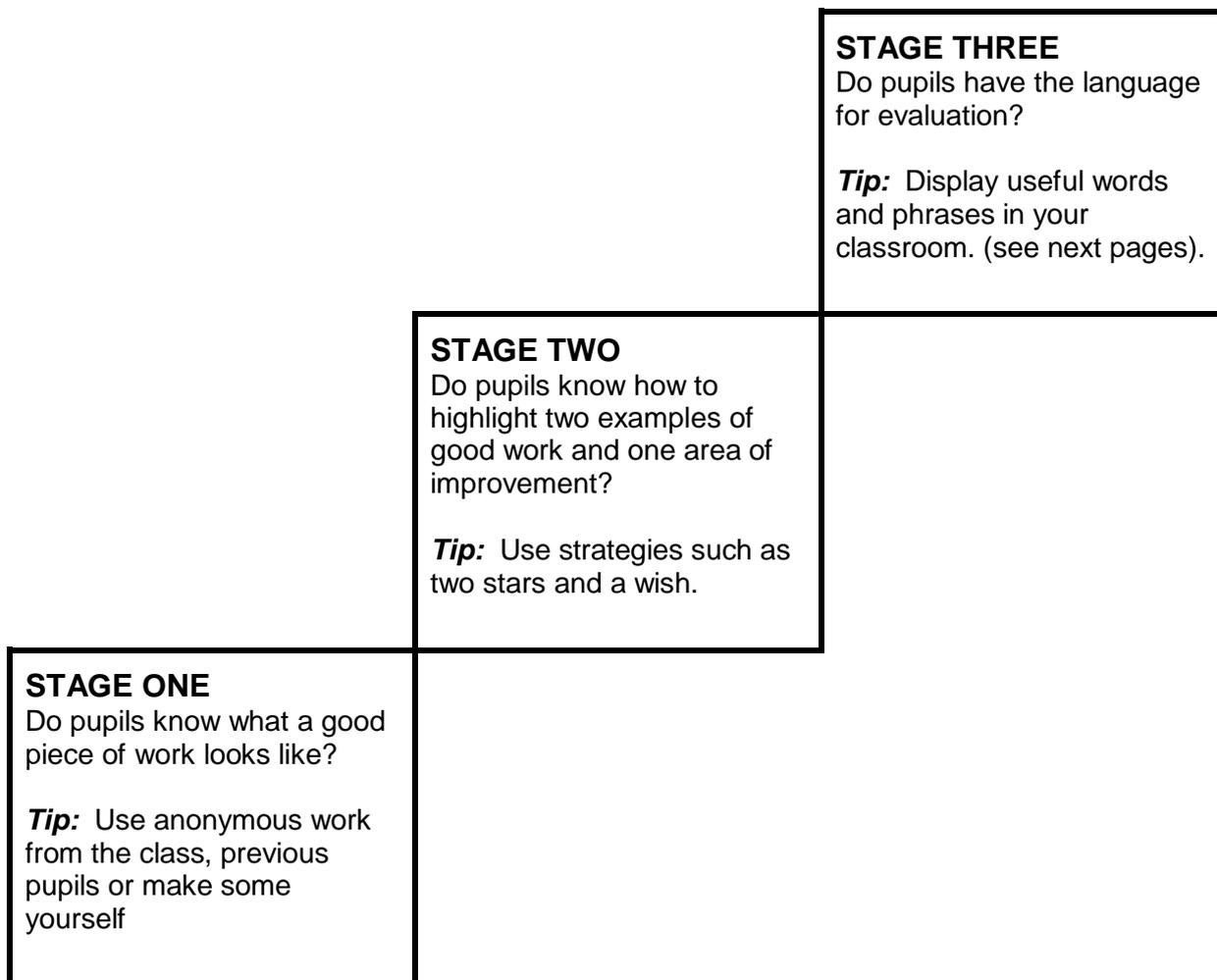
The following chart suggests a general approach to teaching evaluation:



### Peer and self assessment

Give pupils plenty of opportunities to reflect on their own and others' work. They should work out how to improve it.

Consider the following stages for developing peer and self assessment skills in your pupils.



The simplest model for peer and self assessment is:

1. you **model** it for the pupils (think aloud while critiquing a piece of work);
2. the **highlight** two examples within their own and others' work where they have met the objectives;
3. they **highlight** one area in their own work where they **could improve**;
4. they make that **improvement**.

### Creating an Evaluation

Pupils should be encouraged to talk about their work and then bit by bit, to write their own evaluations.

The purpose of an evaluation is to reflect critically on an activity/process that has been undertaken. It can be broken down into constituent parts, as demonstrated below.

STRUCTURE	LANGUAGE FEATURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of what was to be achieved (planning)</li> <li>• Description of what was done (action)</li> <li>• Explanation of why particular decisions were made, with reference to identified criteria (planning)</li> <li>• Description of changes that were made, and explanation of why those changes were made (review)</li> <li>• Analysis of and judgement about what worked or was good/what did not work (review)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conditionals, e.g. <i>could, should, would</i></li> <li>• Often in first person singular, e.g. <i>I decided to</i></li> <li>• Clear sequential structure, from planning to implementation to review, e.g. <i>firstly, then, finally</i></li> <li>• Casual connectives: This was not a good idea <i>because</i></li> </ul>

Many pupils need to progress through the various phases of evaluation which include:

- describing what they are doing and how they feel;
- talk/write about what they and others have done and make simple suggestions to improve;
- improve through practising skills and describe what they and others have done in order that it might be improved;
- make simple judgements about their own and others' work and use the information to improve the quality of their work;
- work reciprocally to analyse and improve the effectiveness and quality of their own and others' work.

Below is an example of a pupil's written evaluation in performing a drama text:

Myself and my partner decided to do a scene from *Translations* by Brian Friel. I learned my lines and so did my partner. I performed it for my teacher and he said that I needed to add more variety to it. I saw a video of the play and that gave me some good ideas. I think I performed my character well in the final exam. My class liked it and they all thought that I should play more parts in our drama productions.

This work relies purely on description.

The following example develops the work above and explains why things were done (using words like *although*, *because*, *so*, *realised* which the pupils has been taught to use) and relates decision to identified criteria.

When we were asked to select a piece to perform for our GCSE drama practical performance my partner and I considered a lot of texts before reaching the conclusion that we should perform a scene from *Translations* by Brian Friel. We chose the scene between Maire and Yolland because it provided us with plenty of opportunities to develop our movement, gesture and facial expressions as well as vocal skills. Also we had seen a production of the play at a local theatre and we knew what a good performance could look and sound like.

I started by learning my lines so that I could then develop the characterization, motivation, etc. without being hampered by a script in my hand. I found it hard to do that, so I realised that it was better to learn the lines when I had my cues from the other character. I decided to learn my lines by recording the other character's part and playing it on my MP3 player so that I could slot my own lines in. I found that very useful.

When I was satisfied that I knew the piece well, I began to work with my partner and considered use of pace, pause, inflection, movement, etc. My teacher suggested that we record ourselves on video. When we looked back at the recording we realised that there were several problems with our performances. I saw that my face wasn't clear and that at times the way we had blocked it we were masked. Also the facial expressions were not realistic enough and we didn't interact with each other. At times my projection was weak.

I tried to make it better by practicing my speeches and recording them and listening back to make sure that I could hear them. I also worked on my movement and we re-blocked the piece. We watched a video of the piece by professional actors and we found and experimented with alternative ways of performing it.

I think that I was good on the whole as I moved well and used gesture and facial expressions well. I also think that I interacted well with my partner during the scene. If I was doing the performance again I would have tried to slow the pace a little more and make more effective use of pause. Because I was nervous, I started to speed up and at times what I was saying wasn't very clear at all. The audience reacted well and were engaged in the performance. The other pupils in my class thought it was so good that I should perform more in school productions.

### Key words and speaking frames

As well as subject specific vocabulary, it is also helpful to display in the classroom the vocabulary and structures mentioned earlier which will help pupils to make evaluative comments.

<b>Highly subject-specific (often nouns)</b>	<b>Subject-specific but not uniquely (often adjectives and adverbs)</b>	<b>More general words which help evaluation in all subjects</b>	<b>Frames for evaluation</b>
character	motivation	realised	It would be better if...
performance	consistent	decided	You could improve by...
expression	controlled	could	If you...you would...
physical	balanced	should	When you...you should...
movement	coordinated	would	It is better because...
gesture	considered	frequently	This means that...
script	relevant	usually	In order to...
interaction	contrasting	because	Changing the...would...

## **5. ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE**

### **5.1 DR1A Devised Practical Performance (Controlled Assessment)**

**Please note that contrary to the first edition of the specification, pupils may be assessed in the technical options for both DR1 and DR2 units.**

Task setting, taking and marking for the devised performance task have medium controls. The teacher and pupil will select appropriate material to perform, in keeping with the details on page 10 of the specification. Pupils will complete their performance assessment for the teacher. The teacher will record the work on video/DVD and the teacher's marks will be moderated.

A video demonstrating standards for the DR1A task will be added here in due course.

### **5.2 DR1B Devised Performance Report (Controlled Assessment)**

Task setting, taking and marking for the devised performance report have medium controls. The pupil will write a report on the devised practical performance completed in task one, in keeping with the details on page 23 of the specification. The teacher will mark the reports, a sample of which will be sent to the moderator.

An example of a DR1B report is presented on the following page. This report has been prepared using the three broad headings as outlined in the specification. It is acceptable for pupils to include further sub-headings to further focus their work, if they so wish.

## DR1B Devised Performance Report

Name: xxxxxxxx Candidate number: xxxxxx

Centre name: xxxxxx Centre no: xxxxxx

### Rationale

We had several workshops in our drama classes on theatrical genres and practitioners. When we were given the choice of stimulus material from our teacher, my group worked together to brainstorm ideas on each one, considering how our ideas could reflect a genre or practitioner. After much deliberation, we decided to opt for the theme of Behind the Mask and to develop this in a musical theatre genre.

There were three pupils in our group acting with one pupil doing lighting and sound.

At this stage all of us were involved in devising the piece. We used large sheets of paper on the floor and wrote down all of our ideas on the theme of Behind the Mask. We had so many ideas, bullying, street crime, family problems, politics, etc. We decided to go with a school theme as this seemed to be most relevant for us all. We went with the idea of new people all meeting up at college, as that is what most of us will do when we leave school after our GCSEs. We decided that we would all go away and think up of different characters that would all come together starting college. We also thought of getting some songs that would describe those characters.

We all met together and started to look at musicals on DVD. We knew some things that our teacher had already told us about them. We looked at musicals that had music especially composed for them like *Grease*. Also we looked at *West Side Story* because that also had music composed especially for it but the story was borrowed from Shakespeare. We also looked at musicals that used music already composed such as *Mama Mia*. Because this was a drama task and to compose and learn our own music would take far too long we decided that we would create a piece in the style of *Mama Mia* or *Return to the Forbidden Planet*. In these musicals, a story is created around music that has already been composed. In *Mama Mia* its all about the music of Abba, or a similar one would be *We Will Rock You* based on the music of Queen. We started to think about the songs that we might like to include, whether they would be all around one band, based on several bands, or whether our piece would be based on a story that already existed. We decided that it would be easier for us to pick a variety of songs from various artists rather than limiting ourselves to one band or composer. We also thought that it would be best if we created our own story.

We were lucky, as a local amateur dramatic group were performing the musical *Godspell* and we were able to get tickets to see it. We also went to see *Mary Poppins* in the WMC. This helped us to see how two contrasting musical theatre productions could be successful.

## **Development**

We all went away and did some individual research on various characters that might come together on the first day of term at college. I started to think about a character that was afraid to be herself and was pretending to be somebody who was much more wealthy than she was in reality. I started to listen to songs on my MP3 player that would be suitable to that kind of person. I also started listening to lots of CDs both old and modern. I also researched on the internet various stories on newspapers on teenagers that lie. I brought copies of the articles, pictures and some of the music into the lesson for the others to consider in my group.

We all agreed that my idea was a good one, and so the rest of my group went away to think more about this theme and to research more songs.

With all of that in place we were ready to start devising our piece. We knew that in the musical theatre genre, which we had studied with our teacher that we needed to select music that created the right atmosphere and songs that extended the thoughts and character of each individual.

We began putting the main idea of our piece together – start, middle and end, so that we knew what the broad story would be. This took the shape of a storyboard.

We ended up with the beginning where all characters would meet and we saw all of their different personalities. Then it would focus on my character, the one who was pretending to be wealthy and who wanted to buy everyone's friendship.

In the middle all of the characters go to a dance and my character trying to impress them all by saying that she had a car, actually steals a car, takes them all for a ride in it, even though she isn't a good driver and causes a crash.

Luckily no one was hurt in the crash and everyone recovered. Although they aren't happy about my character they do forgive her and learn to see what she really is like towards the end of the play.

We started improvising many scenes around this story and were quite happy with the way it was progressing. We then thought it best to spend sometime on selecting the music. This took some time as we all had various ideas. We thought that as this was a modern piece for our generation that we would go with songs that were current. We included songs like 'The Fear' for my character which was good. And when they all learn about the deception we put in the song 'Lies'. We thought that these worked well to extend into music the thoughts and subtext of our characters. We also included 'The Start of Something New' for the opening piece as we felt that this set the context as many songs in musical theatre do. We also included a dance number.

At the next stage we began to work on our songs and to get some backing tracks to help us. Each of us sang in the piece but not everyone sang solo as some were more confident than others. I sang a solo as my character needed to do that so that the audience could see the real me. We also began choreographing the songs. There were two members of my group who were good dancers and they took over that job and moved us about. Our teacher also gave us feedback and made some suggestions on how we could improve on the choreography.

We then started working properly on the script. We worked on each scene individually and began improvising. When we were happy with each scene and had worked through them bit by bit to finalise them, we then put it all together. It took much longer than we expected. We put in some different ideas and started also working on our characters by creating scenes for them that would happen outside of the actual drama, using techniques like hot seating and conscience alley. We also worked on various tableaux and freeze frames for various parts of the scenes when we were working through them.

All of us worked on devising the piece and then it was time to think about the technical aspects. We decided to go for a minimalist set and stage. This was like what we saw in the production of *Godspell*. We decided to perform it in an arena stage style as we thought that best suited what we were trying to achieve and also we saw that it worked very well in the production of *Godspell* that we saw. We went with naturalistic costumes as we would wear things that would be just our own as it was set in the present day. We also thought about how we would stage the car crash, this was going to be difficult and so we decided that we could use lighting to help with this -using lots of flashing and a variety of colours. We put in some distressing atonal music written by Penderecki to create tension in this scene. We decided to perform it in mime and in slow motion. We also thought that we could use projections. We saw this being used very successfully in a TIE group who came to perform at our school. We also saw this being used effectively in the production of *Mary Poppins*. We decided to use a white backcloth which could project the lights better. We used red filters in the lights during the crash scene as these worked well to create the tension. We also had to consider sound levels carefully so that the backing tracks did not drown out the voices. Where there were no voices and just music or SFX the levels could go up.

## **Performance**

My performance didn't go as well as I had hoped. I seemed to be very nervous and didn't feel that I portrayed the character with enough confidence. I also felt that my singing was not clear, and although I wasn't being assessed on how well I sang, I still felt that I didn't portray my character well during my solo song. It got better as I went along and I felt that I grew into the part more, using pause and inflection more. I was pleased with my final monologue. I feel that I portrayed the deep emotion of the character at this stage and many people in the audience said that they found it powerful and touching. I also started to interact better with the other characters. I worked very well with the character called Dawn. She seemed very confident and put me at ease. I think I responded well to her. We did have a problem with our staging. In one of the scenes we didn't have some of the props that we needed. We did manage to work through this and the audience didn't seem to know that there was a problem at all. I think that the car crash went well, the various lighting effects that we had planned and the sound effects and music all worked well together with the slow motion and mime and this proved very effective. There was a slight hitch at the beginning of the group number as when the hall was filled with people the sound levels seemed to change and we couldn't really hear the backing track. However, we kept it going and when it was turned up it worked out better.

I felt that our costumes worked well in our performance as we chose colours and styles that suited the piece and ourselves. They also worked well with the lights that we selected. There was a problem with one costume change with one of the girls in my group. From this we all have learned that you need to work on the costume changes during rehearsal to see how much time you need. We covered for it on stage, but if doing it again we would work on this aspect.

If we were doing this again, we might work on more technical things. Some of the other groups used gobos quite effectively and they experimented more than we did with the lighting and sound effects.

I really enjoyed being part of the group and I think this has helped me develop as an actor. I think that we all worked well as a group. I think that although I didn't feel confident initially that I built upon that during the final performance and that when I work on my set text that I can use that experience positively.

### **5.3 DR2 Performance from a Text (External Assessment)**

**Please note that contrary to the first edition of the specification, pupils may be assessed in the technical options for both DR1 and DR2 units.**

A video demonstrating standards for the DR2 unit will be added here in due course.

## 5.4 DR3 Written Examination (External Assessment)

Teachers are reminded that pupils are only required to study **one** set text. This text should be taught practically as this is the best way to answer the questions set in the examination.

The first question will be based on acting and character positioning.

The second question will be based on a technical aspect. This could be costume as in the specimen paper, but it might also be based on lighting or sound.

The third question will require pupils to show how they would communicate a role as an actor.

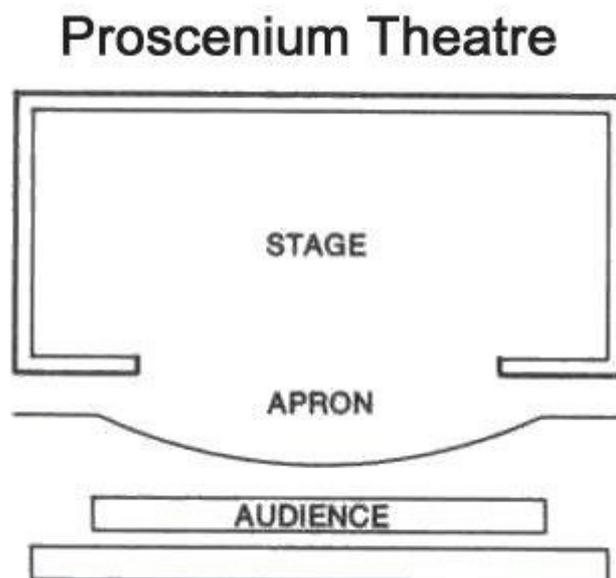
The fourth question will ask pupils to consider the design of a particular scene. For the purpose of this examination, pupils could use the following plans for the various staging options as a basis for their design:

### Proscenium

The audience is positioned in front of the stage, and the stage can be looked upon like a picture frame. The 'frame' itself is called the Proscenium Arch. This is the style of most traditional theatres.

### Apron

In some proscenium theatres, the stage extends forward in front of the proscenium arch. This is called an apron stage.

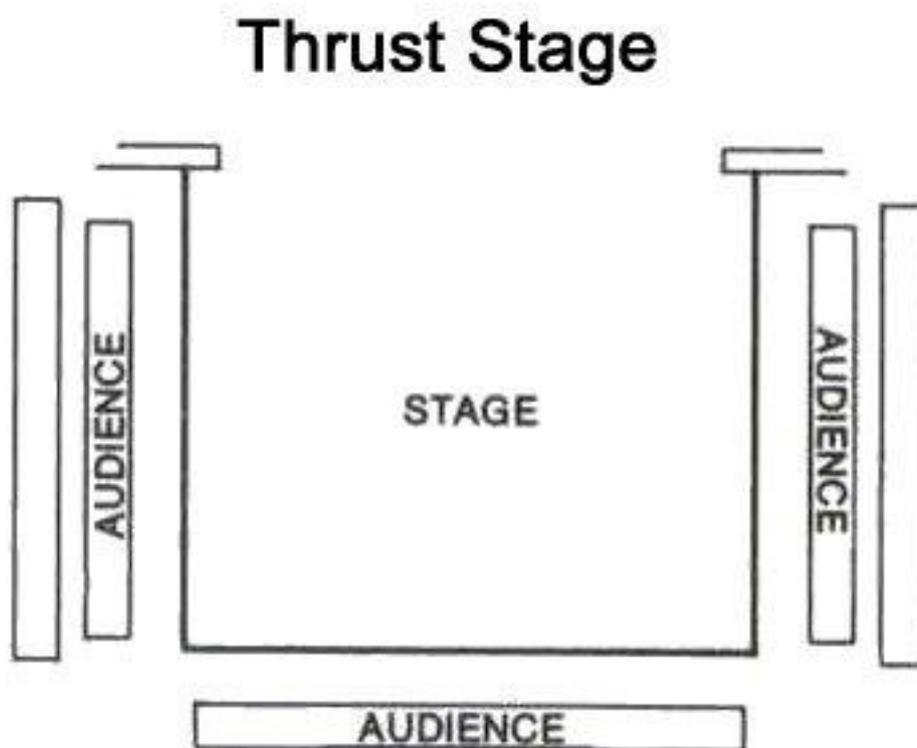


### End Stage or Open Stage

Similar audience layout to a proscenium theatre, but without the arch. The audience is positioned in rows facing the stage.

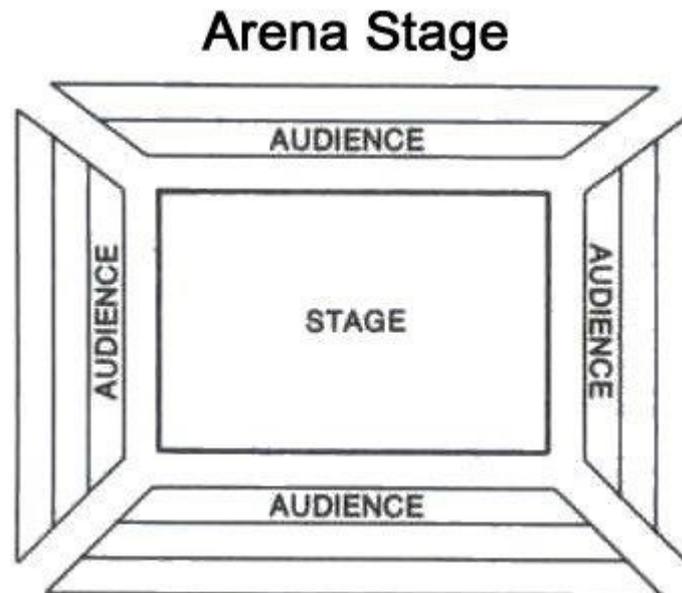
### Thrust

The audience is on three sides of the stage as if the stage has been 'thrust' forward. This can be very apparent, like a catwalk, or more like an extended apron stage.



### **In-the-Round**

As the name suggests, the audience is seated all around the stage on four sides. A few theatres in the country are permanently arranged like this. Sometimes a.k.a. Arena stage.



### **Traverse**

In this more unusual style, the audience is seated on either side of the stage, facing each other. The acting takes place between.

It should be noted that the ground plan must be basic, showing the shape of the chosen stage, which should match the description, the audience position, exits and entrances.

Following this, pupils should then go on to discuss their chosen production style and include details on their set, colour and atmosphere. Pupils should be reminded to give reasons throughout to justify their choices.

An example of this question, the acting and evaluative question will be added to this guide in subsequent editions.

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