

Hello Y11 into y12 A level Drama and Theatre studies students,

Well done for Choosing Drama at A Level. You will have a grand time! By the time we get to start this you will have had a lot of time away from structured learning, so let's make sure that you are ready to go with a whole load of knowledge before we start!



1. Below are some **tasks** to help you prepare for the A level course during the school closure. The tasks here are to prepare you for the Set Texts, but don't require the actual set texts in order to carry them out. *New tasks added w/c Apr 27th

In the same KS5 folder as you found this document, there are also the following bits of work/research/ information for you to get familiar with:

a). A Drama Glossary that you should ensure you are familiar with –(see the Excel file and use that tabs on the bottom.)

b). **Added** to the KS5 folder: **Machinal and Love and Information pdf** with links to various videos to familiarise yourselves with. (see KS5 folder main page)

c). There is **background reading and useful preparation** to be found on the Set Texts in the Keystage 5 folder for Drama – see here:
<https://pfoa.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/lst/drama/Shared%20Documents/KS5%20A%20Level%20Drama%20and%20Theatre%20Studies/SET%20TEXT%20Preparation?csf=1>

Separate folders for each text.

d) There is also the A level Drama and Theatre Studies Wider Reading preparation doc where you will find lots more things you can usefully be preparing yourself with.

As ever, any questions, please email. Any work you want to upload, put it in the Student Work section or email it.

If you are able to send for the Set Texts, we ask you to get them yourselves, in order that you can write in them and make your own notes.

The texts are **Machinal** by Sophie Treadwell

(can be found here on Amazon): https://www.amazon.co.uk/Machinal-Modern-Plays-National-Theatre/dp/1854592114/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=machinal&qid=1585822739&sr=8-1

Love and Information by Caryl Churchill

(Can be found here on Amazon): https://www.amazon.co.uk/Love-Information-NHB-Modern-Plays/dp/1848422881/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=love+and+information&qid=1585822821&sr=8-1

And

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time by Simon Stephens (the play NOT the novel!).

(can be found here on Amazon): https://www.amazon.co.uk/Curious-Incident-Night-Time-Modern-Plays-ebook/dp/B00BGPKCO2/ref=sr_1_2?crid=2CNXSC9NDFJC5&keywords=the+curious+incident+of+the+dog+in+the+nighttime&qid=1585822945&prefix=lthe+curious+%2Caps%2C144&sr=8-2

Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime.



Read the Play on your own (or in a 'group' with others – in the current climate using Zoom or another group platform). It's a really easy play to read. It is all written from Christopher Boone's point of view. He is a 15 year old boy who is a very high functioning boy with autism who is a genius at maths. He discovers his next door neighbour's dog has been killed. He starts detecting to try and find out who did it but finds out a whole lot more than he bargained for. Read it and enjoy it. [It's also a book by Mark Haddon].

There are lots of resources on line and that you can buy to help you understand the themes and the characters, but for now, just read it and enjoy it.

You will need to understand the play from an actor's or a director's viewpoint. You will need to understand:

- Character motivation – (at different moments in the play)
- Other elements of character e.g. interaction and attitude to other characters in the scene
- Vocal elements
- Physical elements
- Character interaction including blocking in diagram form

Example of approaches to Section C: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* study.

Ground Plan

1. Task:

Draw a plan of your bedroom.
Think of scale, position of furniture.
Position of door?

*Consider scale e.g. is the waste paper basket bigger than the bed?
Explore how straight the walls are.*

| | |
|---|--|
| Position of window? Any other light sources? e.g. window, lamp, laptop, fishtank How will you show the shape of things? e.g. desk, beanbag | <i>Any details e.g. alcoves, built-in cupboards. You can use colour if you wish.</i> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Discussion:</p> <p>That's a realistic plan of your bedroom. How can you make that into a theatre set?</p> <p>Focus on a BOX SET concept:</p> <p>Take away one wall. Where will the audience sit? What do you have to do to the walls to make them a set? Angle them outwards a little? Do you need to rearrange the furniture to make the room visible to an audience? Sight lines!</p> <p>Draw a second plan – this time a GROUND PLAN of your bedroom set. Stay REALISTIC.</p> | |

| |
|--|
| <p>What's outside your window? A view of trees, buildings? Where do you place the door? What's outside the door? Landing? Where are the light sources? Where would you position lanterns? Behind the window? Outside the door? Any sound sources? e.g. music systems, televisions, telephones, games consoles. Noises outside? Where could you place small speakers in the set to replicate the sounds in your room?</p> |
| <p>2. Draw a final GROUND PLAN incorporating ALL the elements you have discovered.</p> |
| <p>3. Create a Mindmap for the following types of set. Discuss with someone if you can.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a non-naturalistic set. Abstract Minimal Surreal</p> <p>What elements would you need to keep / change / adapt if you were to create a set of your bedroom in these styles? What would change?</p> |
| <p>4. Explore the same set by designing different stage configurations:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In-the-round Thrust Traverse</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Draw GROUND PLANS for your bedroom set in a variety of styles and variety of stage configurations. For example: I In-the-round – Abstract</p> |

Thrust – Minimalistic
In-the-round – Symbolic
Traverse – Realistic
End On – Abstract

Link this activity with the study of practitioners/theatre companies and styles.

Add items/ take items away, think of props, stage designs that you could apply to particular directors. For example, might Katie Mitchell use a particular form of media? Might Berkoff have an item that can be used physically and be made to represent many objects? Would Brecht have a partial set created (representational?) What would a physical theatre company use?

5.Variations. Draw a plan of:

- the classroom or studio
- the school play set
- 'set' used for a piece of drama or improvisation (configuration of furniture / audience position)
- the set of productions seen

Try these in a variety of stage configurations and styles.

This will lead effectively to designing sets and ground plans for set texts and performance work.

Practice and refine your skills in producing ground plans.

Theatre styles:



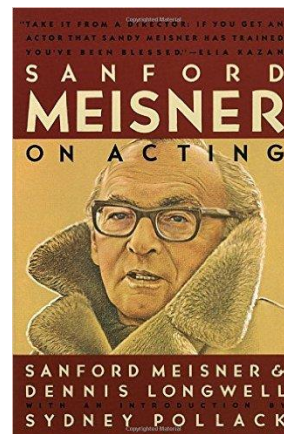
Theatre Styles

You will have to work in at least 5 different theatre styles or practitioners for your practical pieces. We need to be aware and be able to use at least 5 really well. Below is a list of theatre companies and practitioners you should be looking at making notes about so get watching and learning about them.

You have started with Brecht (Epic theatre) and Stanislavski (Naturalism), Berkoff, Artaud and other Physical theatre at GCSE but we need to go deeper and know a lot more. One of the tasks in this is lots of You Tube watching and looking at how the styles of different practitioners are formed.

You already have worked on Brecht and naturalism, but here are some more and some links to see examples of different styles of work.

You will at some time work in the style of naturalism with practitioners and directors like Stanislavski, Meisner and Uta Hagen



Fill in this table. The more you do the better, but this will get you thinking a little bit. You'll need a bit of internet research here.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Definition of theatrical naturalism | Example of a Stanislavskian acting and rehearsal technique | Example of a Meisner technique | Example of a technique by Uta Hagen |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

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Frantic Assembly
Lots of expressive work physically.

Here is the search engine to a range of their techniques:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=frantic+assembly+techniques&ie=&oe=>

Refresh your memories on their work: Watch a range of these – they are all pretty short, then fill in this table.

Frantic Assembly. Name the technique and a brief description of how you do it. I've added in one. There are loads of there. Pick your favourite 4

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Chair Duets: How to do it. | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|

Stephen Berkoff.



Some key features:

Exaggerated facial expressions, stylised mime, physical creation of characters that aren't there, stylised movement (slow motion/robotic) exaggerated facial expressions direct address , exaggerated vocal work, tableaux, mask, ensemble playing , minimalism.

Watch this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6DUUpCflCyM>

Then there are lots of examples on You Tube of Berkoff style pieces done for A level. Watch a few and then see the style features listed above.

Kill the Beast. Really fun style.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rssboxELoVoMake> sure you watch the whole clip. Fill in the table below about what you see from this clip? Scene 2 is really useful!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FE42tTgMfcU>

| Element of theatre | Describe What it's like |
|---|---|
| Staging | Locations done by a cartoony picture on a projection. Lots of colour. A few set pieces of set and props |
| Choral work | |
| Song and rhythm and repetition | |
| Lighting and sound | |
| Style of movement | |
| Costumes / hair and makeup – this is a winner for a costume hair and makeup artist! | |
| Vocal and physical actions | |

This is their website: <https://www.killthebeast.co.uk/kill-the-beast>

Another fun style is a company called **1927**.

Watch how the action interacts with the animation and music and song The acting is really stylised. A big influence of stylised mime.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6H8OOnmrDeY>

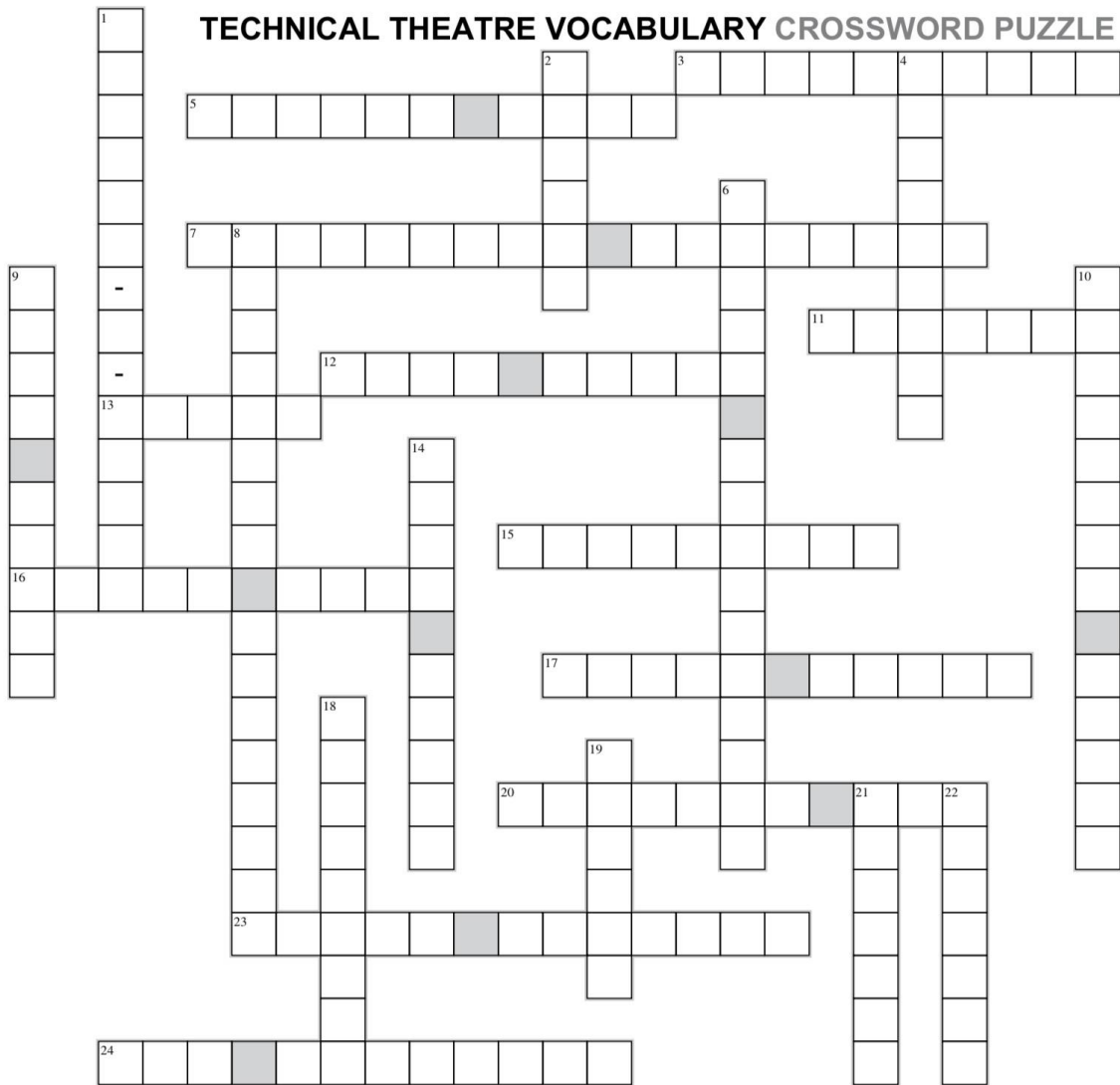
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syCH3VZwbeI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISEuAszJx8\>

How many **Brecht** techniques can you remember from your work at GCSE?

List them all below. How many can you name? 5? 10? 15?

TECHNICAL THEATRE VOCABULARY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

3. The lever on a lighting control console that simultaneously dims all the channels from one cut to the next.
5. The book compiled by the stage manager, containing all the pertinent information about the show.
7. A platform that pivots on one corner.
11. A small drapery that runs across the top of the grand drape and hides the hardware that suspends it.
12. The space on the stage that is not visible to the audience.
13. A device that creates a thin mist of fog throughout the stage.
15. The backstage bulletin board where announcements, schedules and other information is posted.
16. A common area where performers wait until it is time to go onstage.

17. The right side of the auditorium, from the audience's point of view.
20. A microphone designed to pick up sound only directly in front of it.
23. Flats and platforms that are stored and used for many different productions.
24. Decorations that have no function on a set, but are merely placed there to look good.

Down

1. Anything in the house, rather than onstage.
2. A speaker element that reproduces the low-end frequencies.
4. The diagram showing the placement of the scenery as viewed from above.

6. A portal that gives the set its own "picture frame."
8. A bank of small PAR cans all mounted in the same fixture. Used to create a bright wash of light on the audience.
9. Light coming from upstage of an actor.
10. Items that are carried onstage by the actor during a performance.
14. A microphone with a horizontal attachment that can reach over a keyboard or other musical instrument.
18. A speaker designed to play very low, almost inaudible frequencies.
19. The control on a follow spot that fades out the light by slowly closing a set of doors.
21. The draperies or flats that hide backstage from the audience.
22. The wheels on a platform.

Don't forget to check out the other documents and especially the 3. Introducing Machinal and Love and Information document in the KS5 A level Drama and Theatre folder during the time we are off. You will be off to a flying start with the brilliant 2 years of A level Drama.