

# Hayesfield School

## A Level Theatre Studies (Edexcel Board)

There are four units in A Level Theatre Studies and these are outlines below. We have excellent facilities here at Hayesfield as well as opportunities to perform at the egg theatre and The Rondo Theatre in Bath. We have a brand new Leapfrog 96 lighting board and opportunities to learn and hone technical skills. The A Level specification breaks down as follows:

### **Unit 1 – Exploration of Drama and Theatre**

In this first part of the AS course, you will firstly explore a range of different theories about drama. These will be ideas that have been developed by theatre practitioners – people who have had a significant impact or influence on modern theatre. You will learn about the methods of people like Stanislavski, Brecht, Artaud and others. There will be a lot of practical exploration of these methods before you move on to the detailed study of **two** plays.

These plays will be chosen in order to provide you with challenging opportunities to put your practitioner knowledge into practice. What methods and techniques work best when staging a play and why? The lessons will look in close detail at how to perform these plays for a modern audience. During the whole process you will be expected to keep detailed exploration notes. At the end of term 2 you will write up your notes, add diagrams, sketches, pictures and anything else relevant and hand it all in as your coursework.

The final part of Unit 1 is to go to the theatre and see a live performance. Obviously this is something we expect you to do regularly if you want to do well in Theatre Studies, but this time you will have to write a 1000 word evaluation of the production. This tests your ability to watch and analyse a performance, understanding why certain decisions have been made by the director and actors. The evaluation can include sketches and diagrams.

### **Unit 2 – Theatre Text in Performance**

This is the unit which tests your skills as a performer. Firstly you will choose a monologue or duologue from any suitable play and learn it. You will perform this to an external examiner. Your teacher will guide you towards a suitable play and help you rehearse it.

Secondly you will work in a small group to adapt an existing play for a performance. This will be directed by your teacher. They will cast the play and rehearse it with you. The teacher will also help you to provide set, costumes, lights and props. Again this is performed to an external examiner and accounts for 50% of your AS mark.

### **Unit 3 – Exploration of Dramatic Performance**

This unit tests your creativity and team working skills. In small groups you will devise and create a play of your own. This will be based on stimulus materials you provide or your teacher provides. There will be devising and improvising workshops to help you but the impetus must come from you. Your teacher will guide you and help where necessary, but they will not direct you. This is an independent piece of work that results in a performance of your play, usually at The Egg theatre in Bath.

You will be examined on your input to the creative process and your devising skills, your performance on the night and the coursework you have to provide. The coursework consists of notes on research and development as well as an evaluation of the final performance.

### **Unit 4 – Theatre Text in Context**

This will involve the careful study of one play from an historical time period. You will spend a lot of time exploring how the text could be performed and designing a production for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century audience. You will have to write about the play in a final exam, using what you learned in lessons to explain how you would direct it and why. You will be able to have a copy of the play script with you and your own notes.

The second section will ask you to write about a play from a different time period to the previous section. You will go to see a performance of the play, then research how it might have been performed when it was originally written (ancient Greece or Elizabethan England for example). You need to be able to write about how the play you saw was different to how it would have been performed originally and why.

If you have any questions please contact Darian Nelson, Head of Drama at: [d.nelson@hayesfield.com](mailto:d.nelson@hayesfield.com).