

Year 9

Our course begins by highlighting the importance of taking GCSE Drama and how it can benefit you in all areas of your life. Students will build upon the **improvisation** skill set they have developed in year 7 and 8 and will work toward creating improvisations using scripts and a story as a stimulus. They will study **Physical Theatre** and learn how to use music in their work to increase dramatic tension. The final Unit will be a culmination of all the year's work with a showcase performance of a final devised piece to a public audience.

In Unit 1 students study '**Blue Remembered Hills**' by **Dennis Potter**. (The play will be studied in more depth at GCSE.) They will improvise using **exaggerated physicality, multi-roling, direct address and freeze-frames and tableaux**. Students will study extracts from the script. They will look at the structure and use flashbacks, slow motion, monologues and choreography in their own interpretations. **Konstantin Stanislavski** will be explored and they will begin to study **method acting** and **emotion memory** within their work.

Students will be assessed on their initial response to the script, how they researched each theme in the play and will analyse their own and one another's performances. The reason we study this text is because they look at a young child's perspective on friendship and relationships. They must learn how to be able to portray a physically realistic seven year old to prepare them for the expectations at GCSE level.

In the second Unit they will study '**DNA**' by **Dennis Kelly**. Again the themes are similar to 'Blue Remembered Hills' but the characters are teenagers in a modern day setting as opposed to 7 and 8 year old children during the Second World War.

They will hot seat their assigned character asking questions of themselves as actors such as: **What gender is their character? How old are they? What physical descriptions are given in the play? What is their status and social class? What does their dialogue indicate about their emotions and ideals?**

They will use the narrative as a basis for their own improvisations. Their characters will be more developed and they will have more freedom to attempt **spontaneous improvisations**. Students will be assessed in rehearsals at how well they communicate their role in the play and this will culminate in a polished performance where they learn lines and multi-role two contrasting characters. **Gesture and body language** must be exaggerated to show the change in characterisation. The final performance will be a performance to the class with self and peer assessment. The reason we study this script is to prepare them for an in depth study at GCSE level as it is the set text. They will have autonomy over the script and be able to bring ideas to year 10 work on this script.

Homework will include a vocabulary test on key- words linked to Drama and the script will have to be learnt for the final assessment.

In Unit 3 we will look at a Scheme of Work on **'Ashley Potter'** and explore bullying, depression, anxiety and peer pressure. We explore the pressures on young people and how life can be difficult at times. There is a cross curriculum link with PSHE .

'Ashley Potter' is a year 9 student and we have chosen this narrative for the relevance of its themes and the environment it is set in (mainly school and home life). Also students have asked to look at mental health and explore teenage anxiety as it is a current concern amongst them.

Also building on the theatrical skills learnt in the first two terms students will now also be re-introduced to the use of **split stage** which will start to add **structure to improvised scenes** and they will revisit the important work done on the use of **freeze frames**.

The story of 'Ashley Potter' is dramatic and compelling and lends itself to students creating work that is inventive and imaginative.

In the final Unit there is a show-case of all the work over the year. They can choose any practitioner to influence their work; **Stanislawski, Brecht or Artaud**.

The first part of the Unit will be spent on students exploring initial ideas around a given theme through a series of workshops. It will be teacher led. They will be given the stimulus of poems, images, stories and plays but can work on their own original ideas.

Students will be put in organised groups and will be given a 10 week rehearsal period as they work to create a 15minute long piece of original theatre. It will be filmed in rehearsal to enable students to reflect on their work both as actors and directors. Pupils will create an **engaging and challenging piece** that will be performed to a public performance.

The performance will be on the second to last week of the Summer term and the students will complete a **written log** exploring their stimulus and how they reached ideas, themes and settings. They will analyse the effectiveness of their performance and evaluate the success using the evaluation forms.

We do this final piece to be able to analyse what progress they have made throughout the year and be able to assess what their predicted grade at GCSE will be. It is important as we evaluate each student's strengths and weaknesses.