



A Level Drama and
Theatre
Bridging Course

Welcome to A Level Drama and Theatre!

The course you are about to embark on will allow you to develop a vast array of physical skills in addition to developing your theoretical understanding of practitioners, playwrights and texts.

You will need to work through the tasks in this booklet in detail and keep the work you create in a subject specific folder. The work you will complete will be in preparation for all 3 components within the A Level, and you will be referring back to it throughout the course.

In order to complete the tasks in this booklet you will need to purchase your copy of the set texts below, please ensure you purchase the correct ISBN number. This will remain your copy of the text in which you will be able to make notes, you will be provided with a clean copy for the exam itself.

Set texts:

Equus, Peter Shaffer. Penguin Classics, ISBN 9780141188904

Woyzeck, Georg Buchner (translated by John Mackendrick) Berg Publishing, ISBN 9780413388209

At the end of this booklet you will find also find a suggested reading list; it is very important that you engage in wider reading to add depth to your analysis in all of your components and secure the top grades. You don't just have to read what is on this list – try and read a wide range of materials on the subject.

Have fun 😊

Task 1:

Throughout the course you are required to analyse the contextual factors that have influenced practitioner's work; that will include the plays they have written or the plays they have chosen to adapt or direct.

Below you will see a list of practitioners; these are some of the practitioners we may cover throughout the course and for this task you will be researching the contextual influences on them.

You will need to complete a 'context table' per practitioner that includes quotations from your research.

To do this you will need to research what was going on in the world throughout each practitioners working life that has had a clear influence on the work they have produced, you will then need to categorise this research into one of the 7 types of context: Historical, Social, Cultural, Economical, Geographical, Technological, Political.

For each 'type' of research you need to find 3 quotations that clearly demonstrate how that context has impacted upon their work and record these on the table (see below for template)

Practitioners:

Frantic Assembly

Antonin Artaud

Bertolt Brecht

Steven Berkoff

DV8

Punchdrunk

Constantin Stanislavski

Context Table Template:

Type of Contextual Influence	Example One (with quote/ref)	Example Two (with quote/ref)	Example Three (with quote/ref)
Historical	e.g. "Quotation from a book I have read" (3) – <i>this is the number of that book on my bibliography.</i> Brief explanation of the impact on the practitioner's work and how the quote relates.		
Social			
Cultural			
Economic			
Geographical			
Technical			
Political			

TIP: number each source you record on your bibliography (e.g. 1,2,3) then when you record a quotation from that source on the table you can number it based on its corresponding number on the bibliography. Believe me – you will thank me when it comes to referencing!

TIP 2: complete this table electronically – it is so much easier to edit/add to throughout the course! Just keep a printed up to date hard copy in your folder.

Task 2:

You are to read both set texts and research/make notes on the following for each text:

- Original performance conditions, including examples of design and performance elements used within early performances
- Contextual factors that influenced the writing or first performance of the text
- The intended audience and artistic intention of the text (and how you know this)

The notes should be extended where possible; they can include images and or diagrams alongside prose and must be well presented. Any research should be referenced appropriately.

How to Reference

The easiest way for you to reference your work is to use the footnoting method.

Footnoting

(Microsoft Word will do this for you if you click on the references tab at the top, then click insert footnote)

Manual Footnoting: As you type your essay after a quotation you type a number that links to your numbered bibliography, you then insert a footer at the bottom of the page with the numbers and the full reference.

Suggested Reading List for A Level Drama and Theatre:

You may be able to access most of these online or be able to loan them from a local public library. There is no expectation for you to read or access everything, however the more you read and see the more informed you will be.

- Ibsen, Henrik, *Ghosts*, trans. Michael Meyer, (London: Bloomsbury, 2008). Available as an e-copy via Drama Online
- John Keefe, Simon Murray; *Physical Theatres: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2007)
- Anne Bogart, SITi Company and Viewpoints:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSOwa_hp4qdWVQHb9IQpYkT6jJHVQmUX
- Rudolph von Laban (and Mary Wigman):
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSOwa_hp4qfiHnRW1UTyPnhUm8totzgd
- Jacques Lecoq (and Simon McBurney's Complicite):
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSOwa_hp4qfRp4cYOoKGmgkfnWErKzml
- Pina Bausch: <http://www.ubu.com/dance/bausch.html>
- Forced Entertainment, rule-based durational 'games':
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSOwa_h-p4qeNd9agcFaAiCLCjrSy4nmH
- Aston, Elaine & Savona, George, *Theatre as a Sign-System: A Semiotics of Text & Performance* (London: Routledge, 1991)
- Carlson, Marvin, *Performance: A Critical Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996)
- Freshwater, Helen, *Theatre and Audience* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)
- Kelleher, Joe, *Theatre and Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)
- Artaud A – *The Theatre and its Double* (Grove Press, 2000) ISBN 9780802150301
- Bentley E – *The Theory of the Modern Stage* (Penguin Classics, 2008) ISBN 9780141189185
- Brook P – *The Empty Space* (Penguin, 2008) ISBN 9780141189222
- Eyre R and Wright N – *Changing Stages: A View of British and American Theatre in the Twentieth Century* (BBC, 2000) (and accompanying video series) ISBN 9780375412035
- Grotowski J – *Towards a Poor Theatre* (Routledge, 2002) ISBN 9780807830153
- Innes C – *Modern British Drama 1890 to 1990* (Cambridge, 1992) ISBN 9780521315555
- Shellard D – *British Theatre since the War* (Yale University Press, 2000) ISBN 9780300087376
- Stanislavski, C – *An Actor Prepares*