

Edexcel GCSE Drama- Cycle 3

COMPONENT 1- DEVSING

During this Cycle you will be devising a piece of work based on a stimulus of your choice. You will be given three different options and you will explore each one and then decide which stimuli you would like to use. You will work collaboratively within your group to make a piece of theatre from scratch using the performance skills you have learnt so far.

Ensemble	A group of musicians, actors, or dancers who perform together in a respectful, equal way.
Improvisation	Improvisation, often shortened to improv, is the activity of making or doing something not planned beforehand, using whatever can be found.
Stimulus	A starting point for an idea which can be changed, rearranged or just used as inspiration.
Vignettes	A short scene based on a particular theme.
Collaboratively	Working together in a group



During your devising you will write up your process. Afterwards you will evaluate your piece' success. This is called your portfolio.

The portfolio questions are:

- What was your initial response to the stimuli and what were the intentions of the piece?
- What work did your group do in order to explore the stimuli and start to create ideas for performance?
- What were some of the significant moments during the development process and when rehearsing and refining your work?
- How did you consider genre, structure, character, form, style, and language throughout the process?
- How effective was your contribution to the final performance?
- Were you successful in what you set out to achieve?

Developing Devised Drama Work

Using drama techniques in your work can help your work be more interesting and stylised.

Starting with techniques can help you have a starting point for your devised work and then grow your material from there.

A performer may use a number of possible techniques or approaches on stage to enhance a performance.

Still Images

Sometimes known as tableau or freeze frame. Still image is a moment in time that has been stopped, with the performers still on stage. Still image can be a powerful, visual way of marking the moment.

Use of still image in performance:

Still image is a technique that can really engage the audience as is highlighting something of importance to them. The performers need to use their physical skills to make a still image effective.

Asides

An aside is a character's moment of discussion with the audience. An aside can be used to communicate a line of dialogue with an audience while omitting other characters on stage from hearing.

Aside often works well when one character wishes to connect with the audience without wanting the other characters on stage to hear. Asides are sometimes referred to as 'direct address'.

Monologue

Monologue is a speech that a performer delivers on their own. A monologue can be spoken to other characters on stage or directly to the audience. The use of monologue may explain a character's thoughts and feelings.

A playwright uses monologue to:

- Impart information from one character to others on stage.
- As a way of connecting with an audience.

Physical Theatre

Physical theatre is a distinct style of theatre where a performer uses movement and physicality in a visual way to communicate with the audience. Physical theatre can be used to capture a moment using the body in performance.

Physical theatre can be a very engaging way to express your message to the audience. With the right lighting and sound it can be a very powerful tool to evoke emotion.

Narration

Narration is the process of telling a story. It can take many forms, including a character narrating sections of the play, or the playwright using a specified narrator or narrators to carry out a specific role in the play.

Narration helps to tell the audience the story of the play. It can also divulge more information to the audience, telling them of time, location or character's thoughts.

Mime

Mime is a useful technique that requires a performer to communicate without voice. A mimed sequence is a moment that relies solely on the use of non-verbal communication such as body language, physicality and facial expressions. Mimed sequences are often given as stage directions. Therefore, rather than being used as a stand-alone techniques (such as physical theatre), mime can be incorporated into staging a moment from a text.

Multi-role

Multirole is when a performer plays various roles on stage in one play. Multi-role can include performers playing different genders and personalities. These changes are often portrayed through an adjustment in the performer's costume, physicality and voice.

Using multi-role can:

- Provide an effective way of telling a story with a small company of performers
- Be a device to tell the story, so that the audience can focus on the story's message.

Flashback/Flash-forward

The use of flashback and flash-forward moves the action in a performance backwards or forwards in time. Flashback and flash-forward allow a playwright to change the time period in the same text. Changes in time within a play can be an effective device to help engage an audience. The use of flashback and flash-forward can help communicate a character background and development. It can also help tell the story of the play, showing the audience events which had happened previously or are going to happen.

Caricature

A performer can decide to use caricature to play a character in an exaggerated way, so creating a character that is a larger-than-life version of the original.

A performer using caricature will make use of physical and vocal skills that push their character into becoming a comic or grotesque version of itself.

When caricature is effective:

- Works particularly well in a stylised form of theatre.
- When done alongside other Brechtian techniques.

Symbolism

Symbolism is when ideas, images or suggestions are used to represent thoughts, emotions or qualities. Symbolism can be obvious at times but can also be fairly complex in performance.

Performers can deepen their understanding of their roles in a play by developing an awareness of the play's symbolism.

Examples of symbolism:

White = innocence

The cross = religion

Red = evil

Teddy = a child

Choral speaking

Choral speaking is when more than one person speaks or reads text at the same time. It can emphasise or underline key moments on stage.

Originating from Greek theatre, choral speech is a good way of getting across a message to the audience.

The use of breaking up a speech amongst a chorus can help the audience to stay engaged.

Split scene

Also referred to as cross cutting, split scene is where two scenes are cut between each other on stage at the same time.

Directors and playwrights often use split scene as it enables two scenes to run alongside each other at the same time.

When split scene is used, performers must be focused on their own scene and their part of the stage, as the techniques doesn't work if the two worlds overlap.

Split scene requires performers to make careful use of the following practical skills:

Proxemics

Physical skills



Set Design

The set helps show where and when the story of a play takes place, while also conveying meaning to the audience.



Types of Set Pieces

FLAT- a flat piece of theatrical scenery which is painted and positioned on stage so as to give the appearance of buildings or other background. They are usually made from MDF wood.



DOOR FLAT- a flat which has extra support as have a door attached to it for entrances and exits.

BACKDROP- the scenery that hangs behind the actors in a play. The backdrop helps to provide a setting for a play. It is made from cloth which has been painted to look like a scene. It is pulled tightly across two metal beams and hung at the back of the stage.



DECKING- a type of make-shift staging which is used to create upper levels on the stage.

TRUCK- A moving platform on which a piece of scenery is built to facilitate scene changing.



REVOLVE- A turntable built into the stage floor on which scenery can be set and then turned.

PROJECTION- can be images from a projector or can be through the use of lighting and gobos. You can project a background onto a plain flat/screen to show a location.

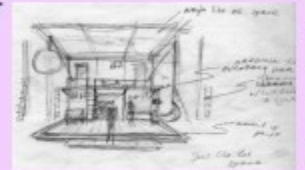


FLIES- The flies or 'fly system' is a rigging system which operates above the stage. It is a series of ropes, pulleys and weights which enable crew to quickly and safely hoist up and down curtains, scenery or people.

The set helps show where and when the story of a play takes place, while also conveying meaning to the audience.

Conveying setting

The most essential aspect of set design is to show the audience where the action takes place, which might be as general as a country or as specific as a room within a house.



Conveying period

The set design should suggest the period of the play. For example- An Inspector Calls is set in 1912 so the decor and furniture should match this.



Communicating themes or symbols

The set design can also communicate abstract concepts, such as themes and symbols to help communicate messages and context.





Costume Design



Costume is an important aspect of a production, as it helps to establish a character, convey the context of the play and support the style of the production.

Establishing a Character

Performers can find it easier to 'become' their character once they try their costume on.

Costumes can:



Provide the audience with basic information about a character, such as their age, gender, occupation and economic and social background



Reveal lots of information about a character's personality, eg a vain character might wear a flamboyant outfit to draw attention to themselves, while a shy character might wear plain clothes in dull colours



Reveal information about a character's circumstances, helping to tell their story, eg a character might begin the play wearing smart clothes but by the end of the play their costume might look creased and untidy to help communicate their journey and what they have experienced.

Conveying the Context of the Play

Costumes can also convey the context of the play, including the time period and geographical setting, following fashions and styles that evolve from one decade to the next. Performers wearing dinner jackets, bow ties and top hats could suggest the historical setting of the piece before any dialogue is spoken.



Through local cultural dress or references to the climate, costume design can also help to convey the geographical setting of a play.

KEYWORD	DEFINITION	KEYWORD	DEFINITION
Base	Foundation colour used for stage makeup	Swatch	A small sample of fabric
Clown white	White makeup often used by mimes	Foundation	Makeup the colour of one's skin
Collodion	A clear, thick liquid used on the skin to make scars	Makeup Designer	The person responsible for creating makeup designs for a production
Costume designer	Person in charge of designing or otherwise obtaining costumes for a show	Putty	A pliable substance used in a character makeup to build a false nose, chin, or forehead
Costume plot	A list of every character and his/her costume for each scene	Stippling	Adding colour and texture to a surface by dabbing it lightly with a paint-filled sponge or rag
Costume parade	When actors walk onstage in full costume to determine comfort, utility, movement, and proper lighting	Dress rehearsal	The final rehearsal before opening night, run without stopping with full makeup and costume and all production elements in place
Crepe hair	Artificial hair made of wool used for making beards and moustaches	Wig	A covering for the head made of real or artificial hair



Sound Design



Sound and music are used in theatre to convey meaning and atmosphere. Technical aspects need to be considered, as well as the selection of appropriate sources

Diegetic/Non-Diegetic Sound

Diegetic:

Sound that characters on stage can hear. E.G Telephone ringing that a character answers



Non Diegetic:

Any sound that a character cannot hear, but instead creates the mood or atmosphere for the performance. For example, if a piece of music is played to accompany a scene (called underscoring), but cannot be heard by the characters, then it is non-diegetic.



Types of Sound

Sound effects:

Naturalistic effects to help the realism such as a doorbell, phone ringing, birds tweeting.



Ambient sound: Creating an atmosphere such as synths, soundscapes, symbolic sounds like water/waves

Music:

Songs or pieces of instrumental music



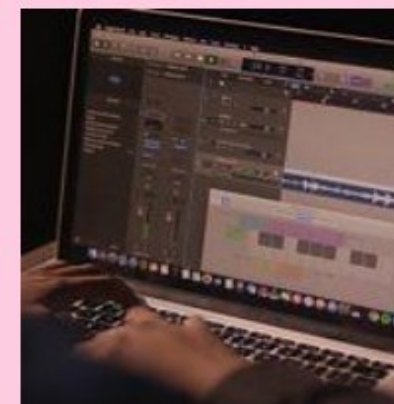
Applying Sound



Live or recorded- live music can be used by a band and/or the actors dependent on the type and style of Production.



Underscoring - Underscoring is the use of music underneath dialogue to help create an atmosphere or to convey a theme.



Mixing- Mixing is the process of layering one sound with another. This can be done live or pre-recorded. For example, a soundscape could include a sound effect of rain on a window mixed with whispered voices



Lighting Design

Lighting plays a big part in any theatre production. Lighting is used to portray time, location, atmosphere and mood.

Types of Stage Lights



SPOTLIGHT- has a hard-edged effect, it lights a tight circle on the stage and usually only a very small area. Coloured filters can be used with this lamp.



FRESNEL- more subtle than a spotlight, used for a softer edged effect. It's useful for good overall light when used with others. Coloured filters can be used with this lamp.



FLOODLIGHT- produces a clear wide-angled light, but there's little control over the spread of the light. Coloured filters can be used with this lamp.



COLOURED GELS- Added to the front of some lanterns so that they throw coloured light onto the stage.



GOBO- a sheet inserted on a frame at the front of the light with a design cut into it. It filters the light, creating a picture effect on the stage. EG: to create the leaves of a forest, or the bars of a prison.



STROBELIGHT- a flashing light, used for special effects. It's often used to give the effect of old movies. It produces a jerky effect on the movements of actors when used on its own

Lighting Intensity

High intensity is very important, such as when drawing attention to a featured performer. In other moments, low intensity can help to define functions such as given circumstances and mood.



Different intensities draw the audience focus to one particular thing.



Balanced wash of light with equal intensity.

Referring to intensity:

Dim/low, medium or high intensity or you can talk about it in percentages.



Colour Symbolism

The colour of the light can help to show setting/time of day, create certain atmospheres and help symbolise emotions



Blue

Sadness, moonlight, night time, eerie, loss, water



Red

Blood, death, danger, anger, conflict, seduction/sex



Green

Scientific, uncomfortable, eerie, unnatural, supernatural, jealousy, nature, forestry



Yellow

Outdoors, sunlight, morning/evening, happy, joy



White

Clinical, washed out, bright/can see everything, artificial, eerie



Pink/purple

Love, passion, seduction/sex