

Drama

Subject level A-level

Resource site www.wqe.ac.uk/tasteractivities

Teacher Sharron Brannen

Resources required Laptop or Phone / Paper and pen
Essential:-

- **FULL DETAILS OF ALL TASKS WITH EXAMPLES** are to be found at the on **Page 3 of this worksheet** you must read this carefully or you will not understand what to do.

The tasks are only mentioned briefly in the first page of this worksheet.

- Preparation for Drama A Level Work Sheet at the very end of this worksheet.

Objective In this lesson I am going to encourage you to explore three different Drama styles, also known as Theatre conventions.

- **Naturalism**
- **Stylised Performance or Non-Naturalistic Theatre**
- **Brechtian also known as Political Theatre**

Assignment details These are the assignments details in brief.

For full details and examples of how to go about these you must read the work. You must read 'Drama Taster Day Task sheet with Examples' on Page 3.

TASK ONE (In Brief)
Naturalism

Improvised Scenario

If you were in the WQE Drama Studio I would have asked you to work in groups of 3 and to improvise and then practise this scene.

But because of the current lockdown situation I would like you to try to create a short script of what you may have done in the Drama Studio.



TASK TWO *(In Brief)* Stylised Theatre

Still Image



I would like you to draw a picture/ diagram of the moment of the climax of the action within your own scenario, whatever that is. Don't try to make it Naturalistic it must just be as clear as possible what is happening, and all of your actors must be clearly communicating their reaction to the moment of disaster.

TASK THREE *(In Brief)*

Political Theatre

Direct address

I would like you to **create a moment of Direct Address** for the Actors in your scene. All of the Actors should stop being their original Roles and instead they should turn and speak to the audience as narrators.



Good luck!

Deadline

By the First Drama Lesson in the new term

Estimated time required to complete activity

2 Hours

Submission instructions

Email to sharron.brannen@wqe.ac.uk – Please don't forget to put your name at the top of the work.

THIS SHEET CONTAINS FULL DETAILS OF ALL THE TASKS WITH EXAMPLES

In this lesson I am going to encourage you to explore three different Drama **styles**, also known as **conventions**.

- **Naturalism**
- **Stylised Performance or *Non-Naturalistic Theatre***
- **Brechtian also known as *Political Theatre***

TASK ONE

I am going to ask you to create three different scenes with one chosen scenario, meaning the given situation in Drama.

Remember, the scenes I have set are only one way that you can explore these different conventions, when you join WQE Drama we will be working in many more styles and using lots more techniques.

You may choose from either of these **three SCENARIOS**

THE SCENE SHOULD CONTAIN THREE CHARACTERS TWO PLAY THE PERSUADERS AND ONE IS THE PERSUADED.

TWO OF YOU PERSUADE THE OTHER TO DO SOMETHING THEY DON'T WANT TO DO...YOU ALL PUT UP ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST BUT EVENTUALLY THE ONE BEING PERSUADED MUST AGREE TO DO THE ACTIVITY.

CHOOSE EITHER:

- **TO SHOPLIFT AN EXPENSIVE BRANDED ITEM OF CLOTHING FROM A STORE.**
- **TO SNEAK OUT OF HOME LATE AT NIGHT TO GO DRINKING / SMOKING/ CLUBBING**
- **TO BREAK INTO THE EXAMS OFFICE TO LOOK AT A VERY DIFFICULT EXAM PAPER BEFORE YOU ALL SIT IT.**

Naturalism

In Naturalistic Theatre it is very important that the audience can believe that all of the action is realistic, that they, the audience are like a 'fly on the wall' watching what is happening unobserved.

All of the actors must really become their different characters with their particular personalities and speak and walk and act like they would. They must interact with one another in a way that is totally like real life and never acknowledge that the audience is present.

Practical Task

If you were in the WQE Drama Studio I would have asked you to work in groups of 3 and to improvise and then practise this scene.

But because of the current lockdown situation I would like you to try to **create a short script** of what you may have done in the Drama Studio.

Here is an example of something I have created...

Example Script

I have chosen the third scenario of two friends persuading another to break into the Exam Office and sneak a look at an Exam Paper

Mo I'm telling you what I saw!

Chlo The actual real proper exam paper just left on the desk?

Mo Exactly!

Chlo Sweet! I am flunking Maths so badly I need a break! If only we could just sneak a look we could swot up by the test tomorrow!

Mo Exactly!

Nic That would be so useful I have not had a chance to revise Maths I've been so busy catching up with all my English coursework

Mo Exactly!

Nic Shut up Mo!

Mo Well I'm trying to tell you that it *is* possible. I overheard the Exam team say there was going to be a fire alarm practise right about *(looks at his phone)* now and when everyone hurries out – we pop in, it's just down the corridor and pick up a paper on the way to the tennis courts then we are lining up like everyone else and they don't even know a paper is missing!

Nic Yeh right? Very funny!

Chlo No, that's a brilliant idea

Nic Are you mad ! And we get caught and all of our exams are cancelled!

Mo But we're not going to get caught, cos we are going to look out for each other!

Chlo We can do this Mo! Whoa! Where you going Nic?

Nic I'm out of here, you two are crazy!

Mo Wait a minute – how can we trust you not to tell everyone

Nic I'm not gonna say anything! What do you think I am?

Chlo In that case you may as well be in.

Mo Yeh Nic...you said yourself , it's the teachers fault they just put us under so much pressure and you're good at maths anyway – so they won't even suspect when you do well!

Chlo Yeh you just need a leg up at the moment.

Nic It's not honest...we'll be cheating

Mo Everyone knows we can do this Maths, it's just we haven't had time to prepare.

Chlo It's not cheating it's just being creative.

Nic Shut up Chlo. So are you two going ahead?

Mo For def! Come on Chlo. (*They begin to walk down the corridor*)

Chlo It would be useful if someone could just be look out at the end of the corridor though.

Mo Yeh we definitely would not be caught then.

Chlo Come on Nic!

Mo Don't be such a wimp

Chlo Where's your spirit of adventure?

Mo That's what friends are for ...to look out for each other.

Chlo To give one another a hand and watch their backs.

Nic Well...

The Fire Alarm goes off. There's a pause and they all look at each other.

Mo Come on it's now or never!

Chlo Please Nic!

Nic Oh God you two are going to be the death of me... Come on then hurry!

Now you have read mine...chose one of the three different scenarios and create your own NATURALISTIC script.

TASK TWO

Stylised Performance or *Non-Naturalistic Theatre*

If you were in the WQE Drama Studio I would have asked you to work in your same groups and to create a **still image**, also known as a **tableau** – which is a frozen picture, also a **freeze-frame**

This technique is often used in **Stylised or Non-Naturalistic Theatre** to sum up a moment for the audience in a very precise manner.

All of the actors would be frozen in **very particular positions** which help to tell the story of that moment in time – it is totally **unnaturalistic** as the actors will have to plan to make the image they create as clear and easy for the audience to understand as possible.

This means that all actors would be placed on stage so that the audience can see **what** they are doing, their **actions**. How they are **interacting** with each other, whether they are making eye contact or touching or moving away. Also, the audience must be able to see the **expression** on all of their faces, and it is interesting to see that they all may react to a situation in a very different way, in a manner that suits their particular character's response.

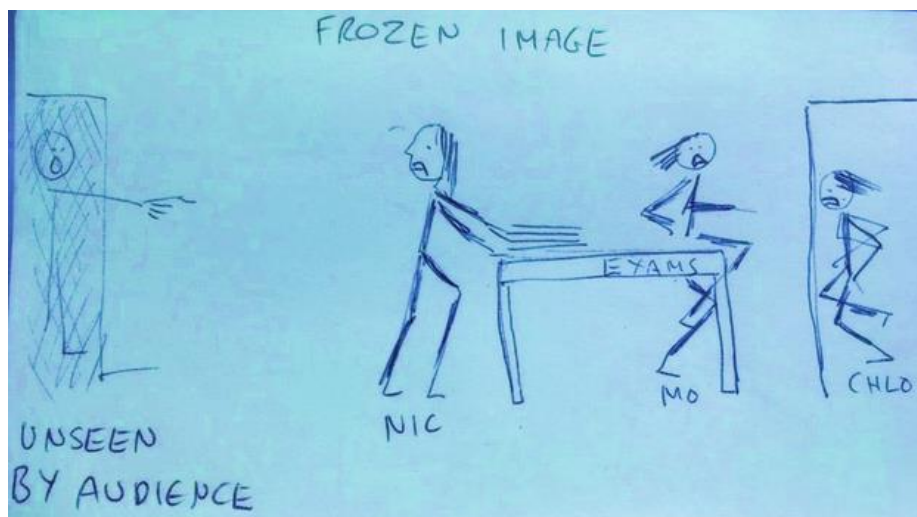
Practical Task

I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE THAT THE ACTION HAS TAKEN PLACE WITH DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES, EVERYTHING HAS GONE WRONG AND THE THREE FRIENDS HAVE BEEN CAUGHT!

I would like you to draw a picture/ diagram of the moment of the climax of the action within your own scenario, whatever that is. Don't try to make it Naturalistic it must just be as clear as possible what is happening, and all of your actors must be clearly communicating their reaction to the moment of disaster!

My Example

I have drawn the moment that these three get caught taking the exam paper. This is very difficult to do – so just a diagram of your plans of how you would aim to stage this frozen scene. It must be clear that the plan has gone wrong and that the students have been caught and could show the three different attitudes to the situation.



TASK THREE

Brechtian also known as *Political Theatre*

Political also known as **Brechtian Theatre** is named after Bertolt Brecht the Practitioner who first worked in this style in the Theatre.

He created a new Convention for Theatre for a particular purpose. Brecht wanted the **audience to see injustice on stage** and understand exactly what was happening, make their own judgements about the situation and to go out of the theatre and feel like they needed to do something to ensure that injustice does not happen in our society.

To be able to have this effect on audiences Brecht had to create many **different conventions** from Naturalistic Theatre.

One of the conventions he used was **DIRECT ADDRESS**, this is a moment in the play that would never happen in Naturalistic Theatre; where the character stops acting their role and becomes the actor again, turns to **face the audience, and tells them a truth** that they feel about what is happening on stage.

Practical Task

If we were in the WQE Drama Studio I would have asked your group to **collectively improvise** this final narration.

I would like you to **create a moment of Direct Address** for the Actors in your scene. All of the Actors should stop being their original Roles and instead they should turn and speak to the audience as narrators.

The narration should be something that **informs the audience about the scene** that has just happened and the consequences for the characters involved and, if you can, could add a point of advice to avoid this happening again, it could be some good advice for the characters in your narrative or it could be a more political point to a wider audience about the Government or education.

My Example

I am using my example to show how Brecht might have made a point about Education or the Government, I don't really believe that students should take exam papers!

Actor 1 Nic and his friends had not foreseen that as the Fire Alarm was just a test...

Actor 2 Someone in the Exams Office was volunteered to stay behind and keep the office secure.

Actor 3 As soon as the three entered the room the administrator heard them and came to investigate.

Actor 1 Nic and his friends were punished by exclusion from school for a number of days. It was humiliating and they were ashamed.

Actor 2 But because their Parents could see how much pressure the School was putting on them to improve their results they intervened.

Actor 3 It was agreed that they would not have the rest of their exams cancelled and they were even allowed to sit the Maths exam since they had not been able to read the paper.

Actor 1 And it was brought to the attention of the Governors that an able and previously impeccable student like Nic

Acotr2 had been placed under so much stress at the time of Exams that they had been tempted.

Actor 3 The Governors were divided, some thought no student should be under this kind of pressure, whilst others thought that it was good for students.

ALL What do you think?

CONCLUSION

- So to recap – I am expecting you to **choose one Scenario to work with.**
- create a **short NATURALISTIC script** for at least **three characters**
- A **rough sketch** of a **FREEZE FRAME Moment**
- A short **piece of narration known as DIRECT ADDRESS** summing up the narrative for the audience.

In the WQE Drama Studio I would have asked you to now perform all three of these scenes, but in any order that you like. You could have the final scene first or the action freeze first- and to think about how mixing up the order could actually be much more interesting for the audience.

Now Read

I have created an A Level Drama Preparation Worksheet : If you are unfamiliar with all of the styles and conventions of Theatre that we have used today, you may like to be better informed. Please go to the **Drama Preparation Sheet** – where I have put together links to some of the different Practitioners that you will become familiar with during the

course. Have a look at these and you will feel much better prepared on your first day at WQE College.

Preparation Work for the course

If you would like to begin **studying A Level Drama & Theatre at WQE** it would be useful if you did some **research and reading** over the summer to prepare you.

Your preparation work will not be checked or marked but it will really help you to understand the practitioners that we will be studying in the first term.

The following, are **six people who have changed drama and influenced the world of theatre** so much that whatever we see on stage today is likely to have been shaped by their techniques in some way.

1. Katie Mitchell & Constantin Stanislavski

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katie_Mitchell

<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2016/jan/14/british-theatre-queen-exile-katie-mitchell>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantin_Stanslavski

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2012/apr/17/modern-drama-konstantin-stanislavsky>

2. Joan Littlewood & Bertolt Brecht

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan_Littlewood

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2002/sep/23/guardianobituaries.arts>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bertolt_Brecht

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2011/dec/21/bertolt-brecht-a-z-modern-drama>

3. Pina Bausch & Steven Berkoff

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pina_Bausch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWls89Pub0w&list=PLD2D38A72DC2A5868>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Berkoff

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2001/aug/23/edinburghfestival2001.edinburgh>

At WQE we study **WJEC** now known as **Eduqas Exam Board** and if you look up the website you can find out more about the course.

<http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/drama-and-theatre/as-a-level/>