

## Drama at Casterton

### Purpose of Study

In Drama all students will be creating and communicating meaning and realising artistic intention, in a live theatre context for an audience, through:

- research
- developing ideas
- interpreting texts
- devising
- rehearsing
- refining and amending work in progress
- their contribution to the final performance
- analysing and evaluating their own process of creating live theatre
- analysis and evaluation of live theatre work by others

### Aims

To apply knowledge and understanding when making, performing and responding to drama.

- explore performance texts, understanding their social, cultural and historical context including the theatrical conventions of the period in which they were created
- develop a range of theatrical skills and apply them to create performances
- work collaboratively to generate, develop and communicate ideas
- develop as creative, effective, independent and reflective students able to make informed choices in process and performance
- contribute as an individual to a theatrical performance
- reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others
- develop an awareness and understanding of the roles and processes undertaken in contemporary professional theatre practice
- adopt safe working practices

Year (total in year group)	55-minute lessons per two-week cycle	Hours per year (40 weeks)	Number of students
7 (176)	1	20	Whole year group
8 (187)	1	20	Whole year group
9 (193)	1	20	Whole year group
10 (192)	5	92	30
11 (202)	5	92	32

#### Timetabling and Setting Notes

Drama is grouped by mixed ability.  
 Year 7, 8 and 9 students have Drama once every 2 weeks.  
 KS4 students have 5 lessons over 2 weeks. There is currently two Year 10 and 11 groups for GCSE.

#### Year 9 Options Notes

Drama is offered in two option blocks, out of four.  
 In 2021 there were five other subjects in that block.

#### Programmes of Study

Terms	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
1	Introduction to Drama and Basic Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spelling test</li> </ul>	Introduction to Drama	Introduction to Drama

		Shakespeare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spellings</li> </ul>	Character workshops
2	Basic Skills Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic essay</li> </ul>	Shakespeare assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic essay</li> </ul>	Explorative techniques and performance skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic research</li> </ul>
3	Story telling	Introduction to staging	Performance from text
4	Story telling assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing in Drama to devise</li> </ul>	Staging assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing in Drama to devise</li> <li>• Core knowledge test 1</li> </ul>	Live evaluation written component.
5	Silent movies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading for Meaning</li> </ul>	Greek Theatre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core knowledge test 2</li> </ul>	Physical Theatre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer and self-assessment</li> </ul>
6	Silent Movies Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Knowledge test</li> </ul>	Greek theatre assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading for meaning</li> <li>• Peer and self-assessment</li> </ul>	Improvisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher assessment</li> </ul>

Terms	Year 10	Year 11
1	Exploration and assessment of Steven Berkoff and Constantin Stanislavski.	Performance skills on stage for theatre.
2	Exploration and assessment of Bertolt Brecht. Creating sketch shows using Drama techniques.	Component 2-Performance from text (20% GCSE) Students will either perform in and/or design for two key extracts from a performance text.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Centre choice of performance text.</li> <li>● Performer or designer routes available.</li> </ul>
3	Performance from text PPE and Physical theatre workshop (Frantic Assembly)	External examination of Component 2.
4	Theatre Makers in Practice-Live Evaluation	<p>Start of Component 3-Theatre Makers in Practice (40% GCSE) Written paper.</p> <p>Practical exploration and study of one complete performance text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Choice of eight performance texts.</li> <li>● Live theatre evaluation – free choice of production.</li> </ul>
5	<p>Start of Component 1 (40% GCSE)</p> <p>Create and develop a devised piece from a stimulus (free choice for centre).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Performance of this devised piece or design realisation for this performance.</li> <li>● Analyse and evaluate the devising process and performance.</li> <li>● Performer or designer routes available.</li> </ul>	Continuation of Component 3 and revision for final written exam.
6	Examination and completion of Component 1.	

### Powerful Core Knowledge

How we identify powerful core subject knowledge

Drama is mostly a new subject for students on their curriculum. The core knowledge that we use is referred to in every lesson. This will help students to embed the key vocabulary they need to be able to speak 'the language of Drama'. Drama is a highly beneficial and motivating way to enable children to explore and continue the development of new skills – giving children opportunities to talk for a variety of purposes just as we do in everyday life.

How we sequence topics to create a logical, coherent, narrative.

We have to assume that most students haven't participated in Drama before they reach Casterton. This is for many reasons, one being that some students haven't and the other is that Secondary Drama is very different to Primary school shows. Because of this we start by teaching students the basic skills they need to work with others, create pieces and perform in front of others. The utmost importance for our students starting Drama is to work in an environment that they feel safe and can build on their confidence. From there, we can develop their performance skills.

Once students have these basic tools, we then start to introduce the skills they need to devise, construct, rehearse and perform. In KS3 we look at a variety of historical elements that started, developed and inspired theatre.

At GCSE there are 3 elements to the course. Firstly, students take part in workshops about the most influential practitioners in theatre. From this, and using skills that they have previously learnt, they work in groups and devise a piece of theatre. This is performed in exam conditions, but we believe in giving students the opportunity to experience performing in theatre. We provide them with lighting, sound, costumes and set. Alongside this they write a portfolio of how they started with the stimulus given to them to then performing a piece.

The second element is a performance from text. Students learn 2 extracts from a play to perform to an external examiner. This allows students to understand the skill of using scripts and the ability to learn lines off by heart to then perform them. Lastly, students complete the course with a written exam. This allows them to have the ability to understand how to direct, analyse and to be a designer of the play. By the end of the course, they are a well-rounded student who is able to apply their skills to all elements of theatre.

### **Retention**

How we secure mastery (long term retention) of powerful core knowledge

We follow the school approach of learn, practice, test (LPT)

Each topic is accompanied by a knowledge organiser with the powerful core knowledge and vocabulary included.

Repetition in a practical setting.

Consistent use of powerful core knowledge from KS3 into KS4.

## Vocabulary and Spelling

How we secure mastery of specialist academic vocabulary (T3 words)

Students experience live theatre, have workshops delivered by professionals in their field and to practically use or see the meaning of the specialist academic vocabulary.

The specialist academic vocabulary for each topic (tier 3 words) is given in knowledge organisers.

This is taught explicitly in the context of each topic and tested through in the assessment of academic essays and reading for meaning tests. Students that do not understand or use the terms correctly are required to learn them again and construct sentences that use them correctly.

Teachers emphasise the importance of specialist vocabulary to writing, analysing and performing Drama.

Core knowledge tests require students to explain specialist vocabulary.

How we secure mastery of vocabulary comprehension (T3 words in context)

All subject vocabulary is practiced in a practical way in lessons. Students can hear the word in context of a sentence, see it modelled by the teacher, rehearsed as a group and then performed.

Vocabulary tables in knowledge organisers, break words down into prefixes and suffixes and explain their morphology and etymology. Examples are also given of how they can be used in actual sentences.

Reading for meaning tests are set to test students understanding of specialist vocabulary in context.

How we secure mastery of spelling (T3 words)

Students write evaluations of their work and encouraged to use the correct terminology. Any spelling mistakes are then taken home and learnt by students.

Vocab tables use morphology to break words down and help students to recognise patterns in their spelling. Etymology helps them to understand common roots.

The spelling of specialist vocabulary is tested throughout the year and set as prep for students to learn.

### **Academic Writing**

How we define evaluating theatre in Drama.

Students will analyse and evaluate their experience of a live theatre performance as informed members of the audience. This will either be a piece of live theatre or streamed Live theatre watched in classrooms. They will develop skills to recognise the meaning created in the theatre space to communicate ideas to an audience. This will give them a more critical and varied approach to their own work as theatre makers.

How we teach academic writing in Drama

KS3 complete academic writing that is composing theatre scripts. The elements included in this area are stage directions, character lines and technical support, i.e., Lighting, sound and set. They will also write evaluations of their own performances and others in their group. This is an excellent way to have students self-reflect and to prepare them for Evaluation work for KS4.

In KS4, the GCSE Drama course is now 70% written and 30% practical. This is to open students up to all avenues of theatre, directing, acting, and production. Students complete a written portfolio based on a devised piece they perform and a written exam at the end of year 11. Students are taught theatre terminology, technical components, staging vocabulary and the skill of evaluation and analysing theatre.

### **Independent Learning (Prep)**

Regularity

Year	Frequency	Hours per week or term	Main form or types
7	Drama is an 'open' subject so regular prep is not set until year 10. However, prep is set in advance of core knowledge tests, spelling tests and academic essays.	Two tasks per term	Revision from knowledge organisers, academic essays and preparation for assessments and spelling tests.
8	Drama is an 'open' subject so regular prep is not set until year 10. However, prep is set in advance of core knowledge tests, spelling tests and academic essays.	Two tasks per term	Revision from knowledge organisers, academic essays and preparation for assessments and spelling tests.
9	Drama is an 'open' subject so regular prep is not set until year 10. However, prep is set in advance of core knowledge tests, spelling tests and academic essays.	Two tasks per term	Revision from knowledge organisers, academic essays and preparation for assessments and spelling tests.
10	This varies from term to term depending on what the students are studying. Mostly students are expected to stay after school to work with their group for a performance.	10 hours per 6-week term.	Scripts to be learnt for exams.  Research projects on theatre practitioners and theatre companies.  Revision for tests and exams.
11	This varies from term to term depending on what the students are studying. Mostly students are expected to stay after school to work with their group for a performance.	10 hours per 6-week term.	Scripts to be learnt for exams.  Research projects on theatre practitioners and theatre companies.  Revision for tests and exams.

#### Assessment

### How we assess progress at KS3

Progress is assessed by the following

- Core knowledge tests
- Spelling tests
- Reading for Meaning tests
- Academic essays

In year 7 and 8, students are also assessed as being below, in line or above age expected progress, as defined by their baseline. In year 9 students are also given a SAGE grade (Scholastic Excellence, Advanced, Good, Emerging). This information is reported to parents three times a year in progress reports and further explained at parents' evenings.

### How we assess progress at KS4

Progress is assessed by the following

- Exams
- Class based assignments
- Prep
- Low stakes tests

GCSE grading is used to calculate current working grades (CWG) and projected performance grades (PPG).

## Teaching and Learning

## How we teach to the top

Explanations and modelling of techniques are targeted at the top 20% of the class while resources are provided to ensure that others receive the scaffolding, they need to reach that level. Targeted questioning is used to check the understanding of current middle and lower ability students and whole class feedback includes reminders of basic knowledge, concepts and vocabulary.

The mastery approach means no student is left behind and our expectation is that all 'students can', including those with SEND and disadvantage students. Adaptations to resources and bespoke further assistance is provided for SEND students where necessary.

We also celebrate intellectual curiosity, never talk down our own knowledge nor make a virtue of our ignorance. We never use terms like 'gifted and talented', instead attributing progress to effort and deliberate practice and we never stigmatise achievement by using words like nerd, boffin or swot.

Modelled examples are of high-quality showing students the lowest expectations of still high standards.

## How we ensure topics are introduced with direct instruction

Students are explained the context of the topic in relation to their previous learning. Then they are shown a practical example and how it can be applied to a scene. This helps them to understand the benefit of the skill or style when applied correctly.

For each topic we start big and go small. In other words, the teacher establishes the big picture before moving on to detail, examples and case studies. Powerful core knowledge is essential to establish an overall framework for each topic in drama, in other words the *most fundamental* knowledge, concepts and vocabulary. This is not introduced obliquely or via a case study, it is taught at the start of the topic and reinforced regularly after.

As a topic progresses, opportunities are provided for application, experimentation, discussion, and further consideration.

## Cultural Capital

### How we develop cultural capital

We offer trips to theatres to all students, but especially to those studying Drama GCSE. This is an opportunity for students to experience live theatre but to also expand their theatre knowledge. Live theatre is a fully emerging experience that allows students to experience story telling in its best form.

We have workshops based around different styles, genres and theatre companies led by professionals in the industry. This is an opportunity for students to expand their knowledge but to also ask questions about the industry. All that is learnt is applied to their lessons and exams.

Each year we audition students (all receive a part) for whole school shows. This will either be a mainstream musical or play. Through this, students can experience performing as part of a team with all year groups and in front of a live audience. We also offer positions for backstage, lighting and sound crew, costume and set design and show hair and makeup.

We refer to historical elements of theatre throughout KS3 and 4. For example, Year 8 students study Greek Theatre and Shakespeare and in Year 10 they have workshops on the most influential theatre practitioners.

In Drama we introduce students to the best examples of theatre and plays and our proud heritage of world-class playwrights. An example of this is that students in KS4 study 2 plays, one to perform to an examiner and the other for their final exam. Some of the playwrights that students study are, Dennis Kelly, Alan Ayckbourn and John Buchan. All vary in historical, social and political context.

Drama allows students to practice the all-important life skills of communication, working as a team and presenting themselves in front of others. There is an understanding that Drama isn't just taught to aid acting but also students' confidence skills. Developing oracy and presentation skills that are not fully tested anywhere else in the curriculum but are vital to so many careers.

## **SEND**

At Casterton College, our intention for Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) is to ensure that all children receive a high-quality and ambitious education regardless of need or disability. Every teacher at Casterton College is a teacher of SEND. We believe that all students should be equally valued in college and strive to provide an environment where all students can flourish and feel safe.

Through our high-quality planning, teaching and provision we:

- Ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which is adapted to enable children to understand the relevance and purpose of learning.
- Provide an accessible learning environment which is tailored to the individual needs of all pupils.
- Use a needs-driven SEND model, which supports individuals based on their presentation of need rather than relying on labels or diagnoses.

In the classroom a child with SEND may will:

- Receive a level of challenge suitable for their ability and needs.
- Have reasonable adjustments in place to help overcome their barriers to learning.
- Experience lessons which contain appropriate scaffolding and task modelling.

#### Additional Notes

Through Drama pupils develop key transferable skills such as communication, self-management, self-belief, teamwork, problem solving, creativity and critical thinking skills, which prepare them to succeed in life after school. The Drama department aims to develop a broad understanding and appreciation of the drama medium through curriculum-based learning and a wealth of exciting extracurricular opportunities. Learning is enhanced by state of the arts facilities and high-quality educational partnerships continue to enrich our pupils' experience of life at the school and beyond, raising aspirations, increasing their cultural capital, contextual knowledge, knowledge of the performing arts industry and appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

#### Staffing

Head of Department	Mrs Hannah Potter
Senior Link	Mr Carl Smith

