



CHRIST'S COLLEGE
Emmanuel Schools Foundation

DRAMA COURSE OVERVIEW

KEY STAGE 4 COURSE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

- "Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it." (**Brecht**)
- "Drama teaches empathy, decision making, the ability to create something from nothing. It demonstrates just how much can be learnt when you get out from behind a desk. (**Godber**)

Welcome to GCSE Drama!

A huge welcome to the **GCSE Drama** course! We're absolutely thrilled you've chosen to join us. You're about to embark on an exciting, challenging, and incredibly rewarding two-year journey that will stretch your imagination and develop your skills both on and off the

What You Can Expect

GCSE Drama is a highly practical subject where you'll get hands-on experience in every aspect of theatre. Over the next two years, we'll be exploring:

Devising Drama: You will learn to create original theatre from scratch, taking an idea and developing it into a performance. This is where your creativity and collaboration skills will truly shine!

Performing & Realising Texts: We'll study established play scripts and you will have the opportunity to perform extracts, applying your understanding of character, staging, and technical elements. You'll learn what it takes to bring a playwright's vision to life.

Theatrical Analysis: We'll watch live theatre and study a specific set text, giving you the critical skills to analyse and evaluate performance, from the acting to the design. This part of the course helps you think like a director and a critic.

The Skills You'll Develop

Drama is about much more than just acting. This course is an excellent way to develop essential life skills that will benefit you in any future career or study path:

Confidence and Public Speaking: You'll become comfortable expressing yourself and presenting ideas in front of others.

Teamwork and Collaboration: Drama is a group effort! You'll learn how to communicate effectively, negotiate, and work as a strong ensemble.

Creative Thinking and Problem Solving: You'll constantly be generating ideas and finding practical solutions to dramatic challenges.

Discipline and Commitment: Producing quality work, whether on stage or in your written portfolios, requires focus and dedication.

See Some Theatre: The best way to learn about drama is to watch it! If you have the chance, try to see a local or professional play. Even watching high-quality filmed productions can be a great way to start immersing yourself in the craft.

We are so excited to see the amazing work you will create. If you have any questions before the first lesson, please don't hesitate to ask.

Mr A Galliot-Thornton

The Drama Department



COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE DRAMA

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

Component 1: Devising Theatre

Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated

40% of qualification

Learners will be assessed on **either** acting **or** design.

Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre using **either** the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner **or** a genre, in response to a stimulus set by WJEC. Learners must produce:

- a realisation of their piece of devised theatre
- a portfolio of supporting evidence
- an evaluation of the final performance or design.

Component 2: Performing from a Text

Non-exam assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner

20% of qualification

Learners will be assessed on **either** acting **or** design.

Learners study **two** extracts from the **same** performance text chosen by the centre.

Learners participate in **one** performance using sections of text from **both** extracts.

Component 3: Interpreting Theatre

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

40% of qualification

Section A: Set Text for assessment from 2024 onwards

A series of questions on **one** set text from a choice of seven:

1. **Macbeth** William Shakespeare
2. **An Inspector Calls** J.B. Priestley
3. **Find Me** Olwen Wymark
4. **Noughts & Crosses** Malorie Blackman, adapted by Sabrina Mahfouz
5. **Refugee Boy** Benjamin Zephaniah
6. **I Love You Mum – I Promise I Won't Die** Mark Wheeler
7. **The IT** Vivienne Franzmann.

Section B: Live Theatre Review

One question, from a choice of two, requiring analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.



KEY STAFF

Department Teachers

The GCSE Drama course is delivered over three periods a week and you will have the same teacher throughout Year 10 and Year 11. These are normally divided into one single lesson and one double lesson.

Mr. A.Galliot-Thornton <i>Lead Teacher of Drama</i>	Mr. Galliot-Thornton has taught at Christ's College since 2023. He has taught Drama throughout his career at schools and colleges right across the country. He particularly enjoys directing live performances and is a great advocate of developing self-confidence through drama. He also teaches English to Key Stage 4 and has been an examiner for over 20 years.
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KNOWLEDGE CHECKLIST

Features of a Text

Link the following features of a text to their definition

Acts and Scenes

The spoken text of a play – conversations between characters – is dialogue.

Blocking

The character that is against the Protagonist

Antagonist

The leading character or 'hero' in a play who has to fight against/oppose the ANTAGONIST.

Character

Instructions given by the author about how a play should be staged, when actors should make their entrances and exits and how lines should be delivered.

Dialogue

A speech within a play delivered by a single actor alone on stage

Duologue

A named individual within the play

Flashback

In narratives, this term refers to a secondary plot or storyline.

Monologue

Subdivision between sections of a play. They are then subdivided further

Plot

Part of a scene in a drama which is a scripted conversation between only two characters.

Protagonist

A moment during the action of a play when the natural flow of time is interrupted so that a moment from the past can be presented.

Stage directions

The basic story thread running through a performance/play which gives the reason for the characters' actions.

Subplot

The process of arranging moves to be made by the actors during the play, recorded by stage management in the prompt script.



KNOWLEDGE CHECKLIST

Theatre Makers

Link the following Theatre Makers to their definition

Actors

Author of the text of a musical / the words of a song

Choreographer

A member of the cast of a musical or play who knows the part of one (sometimes more) of the principal roles and is also in the chorus.

Costume Designer

Responsible for the design and production of everything on stage.

Director

Person (male or female) whose role is to play a character.

Lighting Designer

Professional in charge of the design and plotting of the lights on stage

Lyricist

In charge of backstage calling the cues from the prompt corner and supervising props.

Playwright

Member of the creative team for a show responsible for the clothes worn by the actors throughout the performance..

Set Designer

The author of a play.

Sound Designer

Broadly, the role involves being responsible for the overall artistic vision of a production including characterisation, blocking and design.

Stage Manager

Member of the production team responsible for setting dances and movement sequences during the production.

Understudy

Member of the production team who has the responsibility for planning and executing the layout of all sound playback and reinforcement equipment for the show. This role also includes the sourcing of music and sound effects for the production.



REVISION AND HOMEWORK

Revision material

- A variety of revision resources will be posted onto the Class Teams pages:
- Revision booklets
- Key knowledge booklets
- Knowledge retrieval packs
- Exam-practice booklets
- Past papers
- Knowledge organisers (also given in class for your books and available on the school website)

Useful revision links

- [macbeth.pdf](#)
- **BBC Bitesize:** You can read notes, watch revision clips and even download quizzes and flashcards onto your smartphone, if you have one.
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Homework

Each week you will be set a homework task which has a deadline assigned to it. This will be marked and returned to you.

These tasks will be in the form of:

- Homework Booklets
- Exam-style Questions
- Revision tasks followed by an in-class mini quiz (IE: key dates and vocabulary)

Independent Study

Each week you should also spend 2 additional hours studying for this subject.

The suggested tasks for independent study are:

- Rehearsing
- Participating in live performance
- Watching live performance
- Creating mind maps or flash cards using the GCSE Drama revision guides.
- Completing the revision tasks in the revision guides.
- Practising past-paper questions or practice questions found in revision guides.

Recommended Revision Guides

- GCSE Drama Revision Guide: perfect for the 2026 and 2027 exams (CGP GCSE Drama)
- WJEC/Eduqas GCSE Drama: Amazon.co.uk: Garry Nicholas: 9781908682888:



LITERACY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE literacy skills are crucial for success across all subjects, not just English.

Developing strong reading comprehension, vocabulary and writing skills will help students to understand exam questions, analyse information and articulate their knowledge effectively. Daily reading, across a wide range of texts, will assist students to build these skills.

In Year 10, students are required to read Accelerated Reader books daily and pass quizzes (books can be borrowed from the College library). In Year 11, the reading focus is on revision material. Please see page 18 for suggested reading material.

The following literacy requirements are specific to Drama:

- Students should know the key vocabulary terms and their definitions. Students should know how to punctuate writing clearly and accurately to ensure they communicate precise meaning.
- The reading age required to fully comprehend all questions on GCSE papers is usually 15.6 years, **but it has been known to be higher in some exam papers!**
- Students should be familiar with the meaning of tier-two vocabulary as this is essential to understanding exam questions.



ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY

GCSE Drama – glossaries for drama, performance, director and design roles

Glossary of general Drama terms

Term	Definition
antagonist	the opponent or adversary of the hero or main character of a drama.
blocking	deliberate choices about where the performers stand and how they move on stage to bring an extract to life. Sometimes known as staging , however for the purposes of this component, the term staging will always be used to refer to design elements. See below.
catharsis	emotional release felt by the audience at the end of a tragedy; the audience is set free from the emotional hold of the action, after sharing in the protagonist's troubles.
character	a person portrayed in a play.
chorus	a group of performers who sing, move, or recite in unison/as one.
climax	the point of greatest intensity in a series or progression of events in a play, often forming the turning point of the plot and leading to some kind of resolution.
comedy	a play that treats characters and situations in a humorous way. In Shakespeare's time, a comedy was any play with a happy ending that typically told the story of a likable character's rise to fortune.
comic relief	a break in the tension of a tragedy provided by a comic character, a comic episode, or even a comic line.
conflict	the internal or external struggle between opposing forces, ideas, or interests that creates dramatic tension.
contrast	dynamic use of opposites, such as movement/stillness, sound/silence, and light/darkness.
dénouement	the moment in a drama when the essential plot point is unravelled or explained.
development	progression of the plot or conflict in a play.
dynamic	the energetic range of or variations within physical movement or the difference between levels of sound.
ensemble	unified effect achieved by all members of the cast working together, rather than a focus on individual performances, also be used to refer to the cast.
exposition	the part of a play that introduces the theme, main characters, and current circumstances.
farce	an extreme form of comedy depending on quick tempo and flawless timing, based on improbable events and farfetched coincidences.
flashback	in a non-linear plot, to go back in time to a previous event; a <i>flash forward</i> would move the action into the future.
form	refers to the shape of each individual section or scene e.g. movement/mime based ensemble scene, duologue, advert, moments of thought-tracking.
fourth wall	the invisible wall of a set through which the audience sees the action of the play.
genre	a French word meaning 'category' or 'type', e.g. comedy, tragedy, docudrama, farce, or melodrama.
irony	an implied discrepancy between what is said and what is meant. When the audience perceives something that a character does not



ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY

Term	Definition
	know, that is <i>dramatic irony</i> .
melodrama	a style of play, which originated in the 19th century, relying heavily on sensationalism and sentimentality.
mood	the tone or feeling of the play, often established or enhanced or by production or design elements.
monologue	a long speech made by one performer; a monologue may be delivered alone or in the presence of others.
naturalism	drama which attempts to represent real life on stage; actions tend to be shaped by determinism (societal or environmental forces).
parody	a mocking or satirical imitation of a literary or dramatic work.
plot	the events and sequences of action within a play, sometimes known as narrative or storyline.
protagonist	the main character or hero in a play or other literary work.
realism	an attempt in theatre to represent everyday life and characters as they are or appear to be.
resolution	how the problem or conflict in a drama is solved or concluded.
role	the character portrayed by a performer in a drama.
satire	a play in which sarcasm, irony, and ridicule are used to expose or attack folly or pretension in society.
scene	a small section or portion of a play.
setting	when and where the action of a play takes place.
stage directions	instructions given by the playwright about how a play should be staged, when actors should make their entrances and exits and how lines should be delivered.
staging	the use of the stage as a design element, considering: choice of stage; positioning of entrances/exits, set items, stage furniture, levels; awareness of audience; creating an appropriate space for performers/audience
style	style relates to the chosen theatrical approach e.g. naturalist, minimalist, Brechtian etc.
stock characters	characters who represent particular personality types or characteristics of human behaviour.
stimulus	an object, image, piece of text, music or video that inspires devised work. (NB: For GCSE NEA purposes this must not be from a play text).
storyline	the plot or sequence of actions within a play.
structure	The arrangement of and relationship between the scenes/acts within a play or piece of devised theatre.
suspense	a feeling of uncertainty as to the outcome, used to build interest and excitement on the part of the audience.
tempo	the relative speed or rate of movement/voice/sound. Can be applied to dramatic contexts such as in 'tempo rhythm'.
tension	anxiety felt by the audience due to a threat to character(s) in the play.
theatre maker	a professional who contributes to a theatrical production such as a performer, director, or designer.
tragedy	a form of drama based on human suffering that invokes in its audience an accompanying catharsis.
turning point:	the climax or high point of a story, when events can go either way.



ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY

Performance glossary
(for performers and directors of performers)

Term	Definition
acting style	a particular manner of acting that reflects cultural and historical influences.
articulation	the clarity or distinction of speech.
aside	lines spoken by an performer to the audience and not supposed to be overheard by other characters on stage.
blocking	the path formed by the performer's movement on stage, usually determined by the director with assistance from the performer.
characterisation	how a performer uses body, voice, and thought to develop and portray a character.
dialogue	spoken conversation used by two or more characters to express thoughts, feelings, and actions.
focus	in acting, the act of concentrating or staying in character.
gesture	any movement of the performer's head, shoulder, arm, hand, leg, or foot to convey meaning.
improvisation	the spontaneous use of movement and speech to create a character or object in a particular situation; acting done without a script.
inflection	change in pitch or loudness of the voice.
interaction	the action or relationship among two or more characters.
mime	acting without words.
mirroring	copying the movement and/or expression or look of another performer exactly.
motivation	the reason or reasons for a character's behaviour; an incentive or inducement for further action for a character.
movement	stage blocking or the movements of the performers onstage during performance.
pace	the speed of voice or movement are or rate of action.
performance skills	skills used by performers including voice/vocal skills, movement/physical skills, use of space/proxemics and facial expression/ posture/ non-verbal skills.
pitch	the particular level of a voice, instrument or tune.
posture	physical alignment of a performer's body or a physical stance taken by a performer which conveys information about a character.
proxemics	'spatial relationships', between different performers or a performer and elements of the set.
rhythm	measured flow of words or phrases in verse forming patterns of sound. Regularity in time or space of an action, process or feature.
timbre	the distinctive character or quality of a musical or vocal sound apart from its pitch or intensity, such as in a nasal voice quality.
vocal expression	how a performer uses his or her voice to convey character,
voice	the combination of vocal qualities an performer uses such as articulation, phrasing, and pronunciation.



READING LIST

Texts

Playwright: William Shakespeare Time period: 1590 - 1625
Theme: Ambition and its consequences, loyalty and fate

Playwright: J.B. Priestley
Time period: 1930 - 1955
Theme: Social responsibility and class

Playwright: Olwen Wymark
Time period: 1970 - 1990
Theme: Society's attitude towards mental health issues

Playwright: Malorie Blackman Time period: 1990 - 2010
Theme: Racism and discrimination

Playwright: Benjamin Zephaniah
Time period: 1990 - 2010
Theme: The effects of war and separation

Playwright: Mark Wheeler
Time period: 2000 - 2020
Theme: Risks of drugs, peer pressure and the impact of loss

Playwright: Vivienne Franzmann.
Time period: 2010 onwards
Theme: The effects of social anxiety on young people

Online

- [National Theatre at Home | Watch Theatre Online](#)
- Drama Online A great introduction to Ancient Greek Theatre.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/ancient_greeks/arts_and_theatre/ GCSE
- Bitesize have lots of helpful games and quizzes, and a forum where you can talk to other GCSE drama students from around the country! <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/drama/>

Podcasts

Great for extra-curricular knowledge and the details around some of the key topics we cover.

- [GCSE Drama - Podcast - Apple Podcasts](#)
- [British Theatre Guide](#)
- [Crossing the Line](#)
- [In the Room](#)
- [The Proper Class Podcast](#)
- [West End Frame: In the Frame](#)





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