

AS and A2 Drama and Theatre Studies

Board and Syllabus: AQA

Objectives and Nature of the Course

Teaching is done primarily through practical experimentation – with an emphasis on teamwork – giving students the opportunity to gain experience as performers, directors and designers in preparation for the written papers, where they are asked to demonstrate their informed appreciation of contemporary theatre in its many different varieties.

Course Content

As a result of the Government's review of post-16 qualifications, a new Advanced Subsidiary (AS) qualification will be introduced as from 2001 (first AS examination). This qualification represents the first half of a full A level. The level of demand is that expected of students half-way through a full A level course. The second part of the A level is called A2. AS and A2 each make up 50% of the full A level, ie **AS + A2 = A level**.

The new A levels will comprise 6 assessment units (3 for AS and 3 for A2). There will be certification of individual units. All 3 units for AS **must** be passed. The pattern at Taunton School will be for students to complete AS at the end of the Lower 6th and A2 at the end of the Upper 6th.

The new AS / A level Drama and Theatre Studies specification provides coverage of four main areas of study of Drama and Theatre:

- Candidates own practical work: Practical work which offers options for acting, costume, masks, stage setting, lighting or sound
- Set plays and text analysis: A choice of set plays a) Greek to Jacobean, b) Post-1939.
- Theatre practitioners: For AS – one from Stanislavski, Craig and Artaud.
For A2 – one from Brecht, Brook and Grotowski.
- Live productions seen.

AS Modules

Module 1 – Devised Drama (Practical) *40% of total AS marks / 20% of total A level marks*
Creation and performance by a group of students of a devised piece of drama inspired by the AS subject content. [This module will be internally assessed and externally moderated.]

Module 2 – Text into Performance (Written) *1½ hrs 30% of total AS marks / 15% of total A level marks*
Study of 2 set plays, chosen from different periods. Students are required to interpret each play in details from a performance perspective. Externally set and assessed.

Module 3 – Theatre in Practice (Written) *1½ hrs 30% of total AS marks / 15% of total A level marks*
Section A: Study of the theories, practice and influence of one theatre practitioner prescribed for AS.
Section B: Response to live theatre seen during the course. Students are required to assess the success of productions seen in terms of aspects of directorial interpretation, actors' performances, design elements and technical accomplishment. [Externally set and assessed.]

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A2 Modules

Module 4 – Approaches to Theatre (Practical)

20% of total A level marks

Creation and performance by a group of students of a **scripted** extract, inspired by the subject content. Students may nominate a particular theatre skill to be assessed – not necessarily acting. [Internally assessed and externally moderated. Synoptic.]

Module 5 – Text into Performance (Written) 1½ hrs

15% of total A level marks

Study of 2 set plays, chosen from different periods. Students are required to demonstrate a directorial overview of each play and to synthesise a range of performance skills and production elements in their interpretation. [Externally set and assessed.]

Module 6 – Theatre and Practice (Written) 2 hrs

15% of total A level marks

Section A: Application of knowledge and understanding of the theories and practice of one theatre practitioner prescribed for A2 to a contemporary production seen or a production in which the students have been involved.

Section B: Application of knowledge and understanding of different dramatic styles, genres and periods. Students are required to demonstrate a contrast of approach to an unseen extract of text, in terms of directorial interpretation, performance and design. [Externally set and assessed. Synoptic.]

General

The Department has developed rapidly and now offers a progression through the Third Form Option to GCSE, AS and A level. Whilst recognising the value of creative Drama as a learning process, the Department actively promotes performance opportunities but also encourages and provides for a wide range of related skills and interests – design and technical.

Most of the teaching takes place in the purpose-built flexible (studio) theatre space.