



17<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

## **YEAR 11 GCSE DRAMA STRATEGIES**

We believe every child is capable of achieving through hard work and commitment to their studies. In order to monitor the students' progress, we recently completed mock exams in Drama. I am writing to clarify the areas students should be working on in order to achieve highly in their January exam and have provided strategies to aid their learning.

### **WRITTEN EXAM STRATEGIES:**

- Use the CGP revision guide provided by the Drama Department (an official published guide).
- Use the 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' mock feedback sheet handed out this half term.
- Be very familiar with the whole text. The play is widely available online or you can pick up reasonably priced, second-hand copies. Keep dipping into the play. You don't have to read it all in one go, a scene at a time will help but you need to do this regularly.
- Use the knowledge organisers handed out this half term for Drama terminology.
- Use the knowledge organiser handed out this half term for the live theatre review.
- Use the live theatre review essay structure handed out this half term to practice writing a review.
- Use the exemplars to know what a good live theatre review looks like.
- Read the marking criteria provided this half term.
- View more live theatre (this could be at the theatre including amateur productions or streamed on line i.e. YouTube/on the television i.e. cbeebies productions/at the cinema – Newlyn Filmhouse is excellent for this).
- Complete practice papers/questions.

### **PRACTICAL EXAM STRATEGIES:**

- Attend at least one extra rehearsal per week or more. One of these should be afterschool in January to make the most of the time before the exam on 31st January 2020.
- Act upon the direction provided in the mock practical exam.
- Run lines with family and/or friends.
- Film the practical work, watch back and make changes needed.
- If available watch another group or companies' interpretation of the text you have to get ideas for characterisation i.e. this may be available on Youtube.
- Ensure costume and props have been sought out (charity shops are great for this).
- As well as physical rehearsals, run lines only to make sure everyone knows their cues.
- Complete a lighting and sound cue sheet.

### **LINE LEARNING GUIDANCE:**

- Read the lines aloud. By speaking the lines you will hear them and they are more likely to stick.
- Ask a friend to help you. Friends can correct you on any mistakes you make, give you the cue lines and go back over any weak areas.
- Practise, practise, practise. This is the only way to make the lines stick. There is no such thing as a "photographic" memory. Everybody has to do this, even Kenneth Branagh.
- Little and often. Go over them first thing in the morning, a few times during the day and last thing at night.



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- There are several apps which can help with learning lines. Here are some I have reviewed and recommend: With **Line Learner** you record all the lines including those of other characters and then listen to them leaving silent pauses to speak your own lines. With **Rehearsal Pro** you can upload a script and watch it scrolling by as you record your lines to listen to.
- Even if you don't use an app you can make a recording of the scene with a tape-recorder or smartphone. Listen to it while you are shaving/washing up/driving (but keep your eyes on the road). It's a good idea to leave gaps in the recording to speak your own lines.
- Move around while you are saying your lines. This has been scientifically proven to aid memory. The best thing to do is to act and feel the emotions of the character so that you are learning the meaning of the speech as much as the words. Or just for a change you can even do something entirely unrelated like juggling or sweeping the floor.
- Go for a drive or better still a walk. Walking and saying your lines can be quite relaxing (though beware of strange looks from passers-by).
- Learn the cue lines that lead in to each of your lines. Being prompt with your lines will give you and your fellow actors more confidence.
- As you say or read the lines, follow the thought pattern of each speech and the overall progression of the scene. Your lines are a part of the play. They don't exist on their own.
- In rehearsals, listen to and think about what the other actors are saying. Don't just concentrate on what you've got to say.
- Make a recording of the cast reading the script and use this to practise with so that you get used to hearing the other characters' voices.

A reminder the GCSE Drama exam will take place on **Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020**.

If you feel your child would benefit from additional support in Drama or you would like to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Wishing your child every success in their studies.

Yours sincerely

**J McNamara-Chard**

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