

GCSE Drama- What can I expect from each component?

Component 1- 'Devising' 40% of the Qualification

- *45 marks* are available for a written portfolio which details the way in which you have devised an original piece of Drama in a small group.
- The portfolio can include the way in which you have been influenced by theatre practitioners, directors and well-known performance styles and genres in the making of your original devised piece.
- The devising process will be student-lead and supported by the teacher.
- *15 marks* for the final performance (approx 30 minutes)
- Please note that there are more marks available for the written aspect of this unit, so candidates must be competent at expressing themselves in written form and understanding Drama and Theatre history and theory.
- Portfolio and performance both internally marked by your Drama teacher.

Component 2- 'Performance From Text' 20% of the Qualification

- A play is studied in its entirety in order for students to gain a solid grasp on characters, plot developments, context and cultural relevance, dramatic potential and author's intent.
- The proposed play for 2018-2020 is Blood Brothers
- Students will work on a performance of two specific sections of the play, one involving upwards of 3 characters (usually 4-5 where possible) and the second involving one or two characters to be carried out as a monologue or a duologue.
- 24 marks for performance 1 and 24 marks for performance 2
- Both performances are externally assessed by a visiting examiner from Edexcel.
- There is no written element to this component.

Component 3- 'Theatre Makers in Practise' 40% of the Qualification

- This component is an externally marked written paper which focuses on a text which will be studied in class by all students.
- The proposed text for 2018-2020 is An Inspector Calls.
- Within the exam an unseen extract from our choice of text (An Inspector Calls) will be shown and used as the basis for most of the questions. Students must also refer to their understanding of the rest of the play, the characters' motivations, the author's intent and the cultural/historical context of within their answers. 45 marks available.
- Secondly, the exam will ask question relating to a piece of live theatre seen by students during the GCSE course. 15 marks are available for evaluating and reviewing the live theatre performance, with emphasis being placed on certain aspects of the live theatre experience by the questions provided on the day.
- There is no performance aspect to this component.

FAQs

1. Will I begin one of the three official components straight away in September of year 10?

No. You will be given some example texts/plays to use as a starting point. As a class we will begin to learn how to explore main characters, plot developments, cultural/topical context, dramatic potential etc of a range of influential texts before you are expected to create your own performance material or before you begin work on the exam texts.

2. Will I ever act on my own?

You can if you choose, yes. Component 2 gives you the chance to work on a group performance, known as performance number 1, and a second performance which can be a monologue or a duologue. If you choose to do a monologue you will be acting alone. Nervous performers often choose to do a duologue which can still generate good marks if done properly, but it is important to remember that a monologue really showcases the talents of an individual, so it is well worth considering.

3. Do I need to be good at English, or at least invested in improving in English?

Yes. The GCSE Drama specification has recently changed and for the first time it involves a written examination (see Component 3) as well as a written portfolio (see Component 2). Experts in the field of education have commented that the Edexcel GCSE in Drama is very similar to the English Literature exam in the way that it requires in depth knowledge of more than one published play.

4. Can I work with friends when we do group work?

Largely, yes. When we work in groups in class very often you will be most comfortable with friends, especially at the start. However when we move into 'official' groups for Component 1 and Component 2 there will be a negotiation phase between students and teacher to find the right combination of actors to offer all candidates the best chance of succeeding.

5. Do I have to act in front of an audience?

Yes; a small invited audience. The exam board advise that we perform Component 1 performances in front of an invited audience in order to replicate a professional performance environment to support candidates. When it comes to Component 2 the Edexcel examiner will come out to give the marks themselves (un-supported by the advice/ideas of the Drama Teacher) and they will *insist* upon an audience. Together, as a class, we will invite a small and supportive audience to share our performances with to adhere to the Edexcel rules but also to celebrate the hard work of the Drama class.

6. Will my English studies support me in my Drama studies?

YES, absolutely! This year students are doing at least one of the two Drama texts in their English lessons too, which means they will get double tuition in at least one of their texts. This ensures a massive advantage on both the Drama and English exam papers. This does not happen by accident, but by careful planning from the English and Drama departments to ensure useful cross-subject links can be utilised where possible. There is a strong likelihood that we may be able to match at least one of our two texts again next year.

Web link- <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016.html>