

The Sixth Form at George Abbot

'Academic excellence within a vibrant community.'

Subject: Drama and Theatre

Head of Department: Mrs Hunt ahunt@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk

Pre Sixth Form Tasks

Task	Detail	Demonstrated		
		Yes	Partially	No
Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy a copy of Equus by Peter Shaffer. Read the play. Go and see a piece of live theatre (this can be either a professional or amateur performance) and write a review on the play you have seen. Due October half term. Read the guide below for more details on the course. 			
Further Reading	See below.			
Additional task(s)	See below.			

[Link to Subject Specification](#)

Suggested Reading List and Subject Resources

All tasks completed	Yes	No
Subject Teacher Signature		

Edexcel A Level Drama & Theatre 2021



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Course Outline

Component 1: Devising

Coursework-40% of the qualification: 80 marks

Students will be divided into two groups and will be given an extract from a performance text and a theatre practitioner as stimuli.

Content overview

- Devise an original performance piece.
- Use **one key extract** from a performance text and a theatre practitioner as stimuli.
- Performer or designer routes available.

Assessment overview

- Internally assessed and externally moderated.
- There are **two parts** to the assessment:
 - a) A portfolio (60 marks)
2500–3000 words
 - b) The devised performance/design realisation (20 marks).

Component 2: Text in Performance

Coursework-20% of the qualification 60 marks

Texts will be chosen based on the strengths of actors, in the autumn term.

Content overview

- A group performance/design realisation of **one key extract** from a performance text.
- A monologue or duologue performance/design realisation from **one key extract** from a different performance text.

Assessment overview

- Externally assessed by a visiting examiner.
- Group performance/design realisation: worth 36 marks.
- Monologue or duologue/design realisation: worth 24 marks.

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes *40% of the qualification: 80 marks*

Content overview

- Live theatre evaluation – choice of performance.
- Practical exploration and study of an **Equus** by **Peter Schaffer** – focusing on how this can be realised for performance.
- Practical exploration and interpretation of **Woyzeck** by **George Buchner** in light of **theatre practitioner Bertolt Brecht** – focusing on how this text could be reimagined for a contemporary audience.

Section A: Live Theatre Evaluation

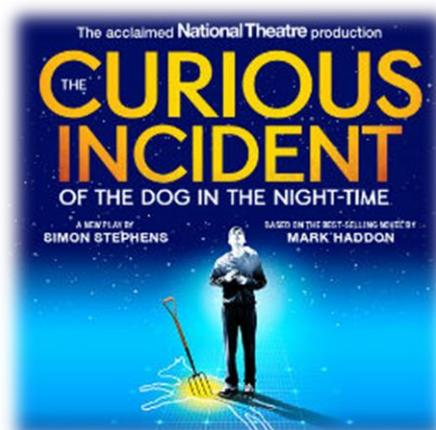
- 20 marks
- Students answer one extended response question from a choice of two requiring them to analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance they have seen.
- Students are allowed to bring in theatre evaluation notes of up to a maximum of 500 words.

Section B: Page to Stage: Realising a Performance Text

- 36 marks.
- Students answer two extended response questions based on an **unseen extract** from the play **Equus** by Peter Schaffer.
- Students will demonstrate how they, as theatre makers, intend to realise the extract in performance.
- Students answer from the perspective of a performer and a designer.
- Performance texts for this section are not allowed in the examination as the extracts will be provided.

Section C: Interpreting a Performance Text

- 24 marks.
- Students will answer one extended response question from a choice of two using **Woyzeck** by George Buchner.
- Students will demonstrate how their re-imagined production concept will communicate ideas to a contemporary audience.
- Students will also need to outline how the work of Bertolt Brecht has influenced their overall production concept and demonstrate an awareness of the performance text in its original performance conditions.
- Students are allowed to bring clean copies of their performance texts for this section, but no other printed materials.



Year 12

Autumn Term 2021

Mrs Melville	Mrs Hunt
Component One	Component Three
<p>Practical workshops exploring Steven Berkoff, his theatrical style and working methods.</p> <p>Devising based on extracts from Metamorphosis by Steven Berkoff.</p> <p>Practice portfolio writing.</p>	<p>Introduction and practical and theoretical exploration of the play Equus by Peter Schaffer.</p> <p>Live theatre evaluation writing.</p> <p>Component One</p> <p>Practising performing monologues and duologues in preparation for Component 1.</p>

Spring/Summer Terms 2022

Mrs Melville	Mrs Hunt
Component One	Component One
<p>Students will be divided into two groups and will devise an original performance piece based on an extract from Metamorphosis by Steven Berkoff.</p> <p>Performance of devised pieces. Completion of portfolios.</p> <p>All students will complete a portfolio.</p>	<p>Groups devising pieces based on extracts from Metamorphosis.</p> <p>Component Three</p> <p>Exam preparation and practice questions for Section A and B of the exam. (Equus and Live theatre review)</p>

Summer Term 2022

Mrs Melville	Mrs Hunt
Component One	Component Three
<p>Exploration of Theatre practitioner Antonin Artaud and the play Far Away by Caryl Churchill. Students to devise a performance based on an extract from Far Away.</p> <p>Performances in July Portfolios to be completed by the end of term.</p>	<p>Exam preparation and practice questions for Section A and B of the exam (Equus and Live theatre review).</p> <p>MOCK EXAM</p> <p>Component One</p> <p>Directed rehearsals in preparation for performance.</p>

Year 13

Autumn Term 2021

Mrs Melville	Mr Omar	Mrs Hunt
Component Three Examination Preparation revisiting Equus by Peter Shaffer	Component Three Students to explore the play Woyzeck by George Buchner and the theatrical style and working methods of Bertolt Brecht for Section C of the exam.	Component Two Component two preparation, working with a script. Stanislavski and Laban.

Spring/Summer Terms 2022

Mrs Melville	Mr Omar	Mrs Hunt
Component Two Students work on preparing scripted performances for examined performances.	Component Three Exam preparation for Section C - Woyzeck and Brecht. Component Two Monologue Preparation	Component Two Students work on preparing scripted performances for examined performances.

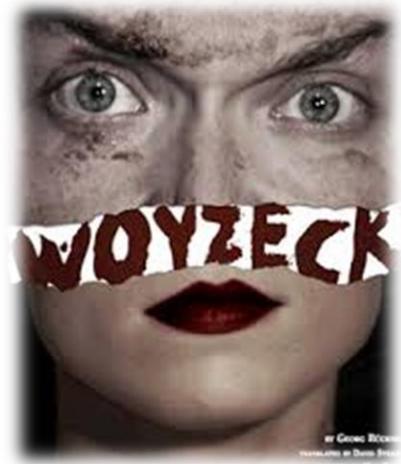
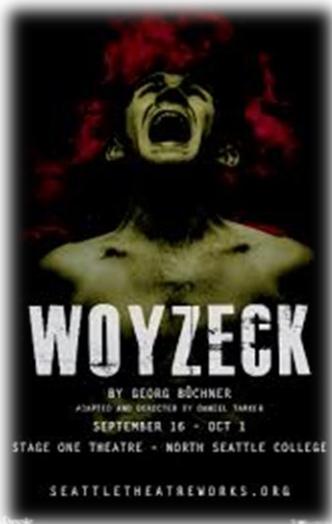
Summer Term 2022

Mrs Melville	Mr Omar	Mrs Hunt
Component Three Exam preparation Section B – Equus.	Component Three Exam preparation for Section C - Woyzeck and Brecht.	Component Three Exam preparation for Section A – Live theatre review.

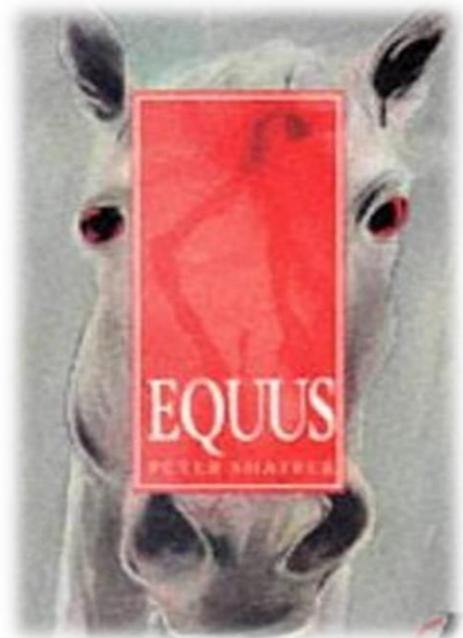
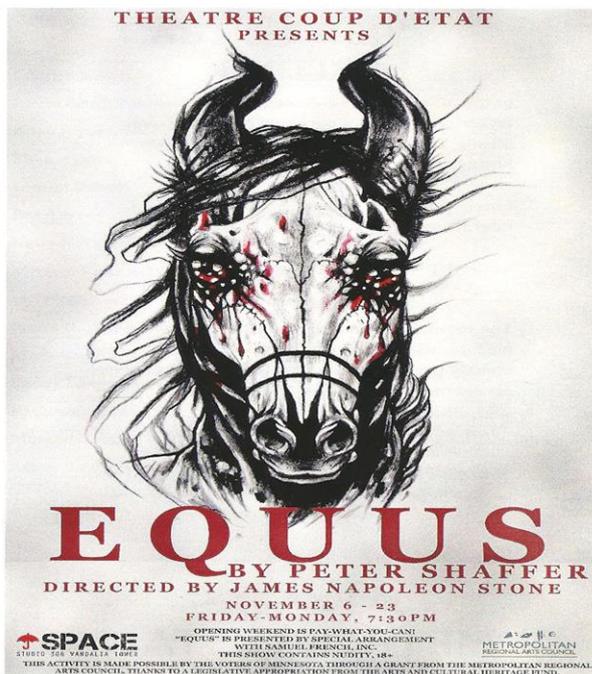
THE PLAY THAT GOES WRONG



Performance Texts



PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION



Pre Course/Introductory Tasks (Year 12)

1. Buy a copy of **Equus** by Peter Shaffer.
2. Read the play.
3. Go and see a piece of **live theatre** (this can be either a professional or amateur performance) and write a review on the play you have seen. **Due October half term.**

Evaluating a live performance

Remember to use **PEA** throughout your response. Make your **POINT**, give an **EXAMPLE** and then **ANALYSE** the impact on you or the audience. If you simply describe what you saw without analysing how effective it was, you cannot get full marks.

DO NOT describe the plot. Your focus must be completely on the performance.

The assessment criteria from the examination board states that you will be assessed on your understanding and appreciation of how others used the medium and elements of drama. It is also worthwhile showing that you recognise any social, cultural and historical influences on the play or the performance and that you can make any connections between written and performed texts.

This means that you can refer to the following:

Context

- Show you understand the time period the play was set in.
- Show you understand the life of the main characters and their social class, and how it affected their lives.
- Show that you understand the culture of the time period, in terms of fashion, art, science, technology, religion, politics, education...
- **YOU MUST SHOW THAT YOUR UNDERSTANDING WAS COMMUNICATED THROUGH THE SKILLS OF THE ACTORS AND THE DESIGNER, BY WHAT YOU SAW AND HEARD.**

Spatial

a. Acting area

- Does this change during the performance? Are there uses of the height or depth, for example?

b. Actor/audience relationship

- Does this remain constant? Do actors use the audience space?

Visual

Set (this includes scenery)

- Where would you place it on the 'realistic to non-realistic scale'?
- Is it a single set, allowing for the representation of different locations?
- Are the entrances/exits well placed? Is there a strong sense of period style?
- Are the colours strong, muted, etc.? Does the set seem to be making a statement about the play? Are there different sets for different acts? Does each setting make a statement?

Costume

- Apply the last four questions above to costume. Do costumes reflect the characters?
- Are some characters made to stand out, for example by the use of colour or style?
- If characters have more than one costume, is there some evident progression being marked by the changes?

Props

- Do these blend in with the set, giving a consistent visual impression?
- Are there particularly significant props and are these effectively designed and used?

Lighting

- Is the performance generally brightly or dimly lit? How does this vary from scene to scene?
- Is it effective in contributing to the atmosphere of particular scenes/moments?
- Is use made of particular colours/angles? Are there special lighting effects?

Aural

a. Recorded sound

- Is background sound used? Does it affect the atmosphere?
- Are 'functional' sound effects (e.g. cars arriving) effective?

b. Recorded music

- What kind of music is used? Is it well chosen and effective? Does it create a sense of period or atmosphere? Does it add to particular sequences or moments?
- What kind of music is used in the interval (if any)?

c. Live sound

- Are any live sounds (doors slamming, footsteps, etc.) effective? Does the cast contribute vocally in any way to live sound?

Special effects

Pyrotechnics, smoke, etc

- If these are used, are they effective in creating atmosphere or moments of shock etc.?

Acting

a. Interpretation

- How does the actor's interpretation differ from your impressions from the text, if you have had the opportunity to read it beforehand? Is there an overall acting style (this will affect the areas below)?

b. Voice

- What use is made of range, volume, etc. at different points? Do the voices suit the characters? Are accents used (and appropriate)? Is the projection good enough?

c. Movement

- How do actors register their characters through movement and use of space?

d. Relationships/interaction

- Are these as you saw them from the text? Are there moments in which relationships are defined or changed?

Direction

This takes in all aspects of the performance

- Are there sequences or moments when you are aware that the visual, aural and spatial elements (as well as the acting) have been arranged to create particular effects?
- How significant are these sequences/moments in the overall effect of the performance? (Endings are especially important as they leave a final impression on the audience.)
- Are you aware of pace and rhythm in the performance?



Example - Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night time review

The role of Christopher was portrayed by Graham Butler and demanded a high level of physical and vocal skill. In order to show the characters learning difficulties and unease with the world around him, the actor changed his physicality so that his legs were not turned outwards like the other actors and his arms stayed close to his side for the majority of the play. This closed physicality showed to the audience his uncomfortableness with being on display. When Butler was interacting with other cast members he kept his eyes averted however as the play progressed and his character developed, he demonstrated his growth in confidence by starting to maintain eye contact with both the audience and cast members on stage. Butler changed his voice for the role of Christopher by making it slightly monotonous and removing the emotive vocal inflections of words to make it sound very matter of fact. This demonstrated to the audience the characters inability to form strong emotional connections with other people and so they audience began to sympathise with the other characters when Christopher became a challenge to look after. The play is told from the character of Christopher's perspective.

The set for the show, designed by Bunny Christie, consisted of a black square with white grid lines running across it with lights built into the set. Around the edge of the acting space was a long white block that acted as a bench for the actors to sit on to help make the performance and ensemble piece as they were on stage for the majority of the performance even when not acting. A large proportion of the show relied heavily on the lighting and sound to establish scenes however in the scene in the tube tunnel scene, the back wall moved forward to create a smaller acting space and part of the stage opened up to create the tube platform. This change in acting space for Christopher helped to show his uncomfortableness towards being in a public location and the movement of the back wall had an intimidating effect on the audience meaning they got a true sense of Christopher's anxiety. In other scenes in the play lighting is used to establish what is going on. When Christopher travels through his neighbourhood we see the houses silhouettes projected onto the stage with numbers to show the characters need to categorise everything around him. In the train station scene we see bright flashing words projected onto the stage wall to the extent where it is overpowering and so the audience are once again offered a glimpse into the characters mind. This scene juxtaposes the imaginary space scene as the lighting in this scene is soft and less focused with warm colours so the audience feels safe and calm. By changing the lighting to match the mood of Christopher, the audience experiences the same feelings as the character and so are fully immersed into his story line. When he is calm, so is the audience. When he is not, the audience are neither. As the play progressed both the set and lighting became more simplistic to show Christopher's adaptation to the world around him.

Both diegetic and non-diegetic sounds are used in the play to help establish the scenes location Sound is also used in the scene interludes to help maintain the energy of the performance as the music used was very upbeat and pulsing. In the beach scene, naturalistic sounds such as waves and seagulls are used on stage and through the auditorium to help immerse the audience so they feel that they are at the beach. In the station scene we hear loud advertisements blared over the top of the action and dialogue of the scene in order to create confusion and the audience is left feeling uncomfortable and slightly unsafe by what is going on around them. The director has chosen to do this as a way showing them what everyday situations can be like from the perspective of a person with Asperger syndrome or autism.

As the performance was an ensemble piece the cast all wore very similar grey costumes with individual pieces of clothing that would be put on to establish certain characters. Christopher wore a blue hoodie with a red t-shirt when at home but when he left his house he wore a red hoodie with a blue t-shirt and grey jogging bottoms. The characters socks were also red and grey and matched his sleeping bag. The red of his socks also matched the red line on the floor for his character to follow. Whilst everyone else in the cast wore grey, his father and his teacher had set costumes different from the rest of the cast to symbolise their importance in the characters life. His dad wore green and brown clothing to show the natural relationship between the two characters as well as showing his job status which further shows Christopher's need to categorise people. The character of Siobhan wore white to show how Christopher viewed her as almost pure and innocent with angelic qualities. The use of the model train set before the interval coming to life foreshadowed the events that were to come in the second act of the play.

In the scenes in which the character of Christopher had dialogue with other characters, he was placed downstage of them as it was 'Christopher's play' and as the main character the audience should pay attention to him. This was shown in the park scene where the bench is placed at an angle with Mrs Alexander sat behind him when talking to him. In order to show Christopher's unique perspective of people, physical theatre was used effectively throughout the performance. In the train scene choral walking was used to show how out of place Christopher was and in the household scene, the cast used their bodies to create the furniture of the house. The cast walked along the grid on the stage and held out their hands to represent things such as cupboards and key holders.

The director has chosen to show the performance as a play within a play by adding moments such as the characters breaking the fourth wall and communicating with the audience directly. Siobhan does this when she says "the audience can stay behind after if they choose". The audience being aware of this concept gives the play greater artist licence and the physical theatre, lighting and ensemble nature of the performance become more acceptable and do not come across as incongruous in the play of 'The Curious Incident of the Dog In the Night-time'.

AS Drama & Theatre Studies (8DR01)
COURSEWORK GUIDANCE

- Each week, you will be expected to complete a write-up of the lessons you have had.
- You will be expected to use the template below, to guide the style and content of this weekly lesson review.
- As the course progresses, your write-ups will get longer and more detailed.

Page no	Lesson Record Sheet			Date:
	Text(s) used in session:			
	Outline details of session			
	Reflections (with supporting details)			
Reminder of required content				
	Description of all activities	Names of characters, playwrights, designers, directors, practitioners and actors	Your opinion of each activity completed in the session	What you have learned from doing each of the activities

EXAMPLE

Page No 3	Lesson Record Sheet		Date: 14/9/20
Text(s) used in session: 'Romeo & Juliet' balcony scene script; Baz Luhrmann's film version of the play; 'Elizabethan Theatre' handout			
Outline details of session			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intro task – in pairs we had to perform the balcony scene from 'R&J' in our own style. 2. Teacher then called out other styles – documentary, Commedia dell Arte, opera, ballet... 3. We were given the opportunity of calling out style too. 4. Discussed question, what happens to the text when you change the performing style 5. Watched extract of Luhrmann's 'R&J'. Discussed why it was successful. 6. Read Elizabethan Theatre' handout, and tried 'R&J' balcony scene again, but this time with the script. 			
Reflections (with supporting details)			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jane and Martin performed theirs as a pantomime; Anish & Karen as melodrama. Me and Sian did the scene as 'Eastenders', which was really the same as melodrama. It was useful improvising a scene we knew from Year 9, so that we were not having to read a script. This meant that <u>we could be more imaginative</u> and could physically as well as vocally act. 2. The teacher's styles were good as they made us treat the scene seriously and humorously (obviously it is meant to be serious!). 3. No-one could think of any styles to call out, even though we know different film and (less so) theatre genres. <u>We need more knowledge of genres and more confidence</u> to call them out in class! 4. We decided that the text of a play is written with a definite genre in mind – <u>when you change the genre, you can end up changing the meaning of the words</u> and the intentions of the writer are not always achieved. 5. Luhrmann's 'R&J' worked (not only because of the star names and spectacular filmic effects), but because it did not change the words of the script. This meant that Shakespeare's words and meanings were focused on, rather than forgotten. <u>It is not a 'light' decision to change the words of a play, as this affects meaning and effect.</u> 6. The handout explained the vocal acting of Shakespeare's times, where <u>actors used simple gestures but put lots of meaning into the words.</u> We copied this style and found that the scene became manageable to act (we were worrying less about movement) and <u>could concentrate on the rhythm</u> of the text. 			
Reminder of required content			
Description of all activities	Names of characters, playwrights, designers, directors, practitioners and actors	Your opinion of each activity completed in the session	What you have learned from doing each of the activities

Using numbered bullet points in the 'Outline details' section ensures you address each point in the 'Reflections' section

Once you have finished the sheet, underline anything you consider are the main points to remember

Make sure that you include all of the aspects mentioned in this 'Reminder' section.

Top Tips to achieve your full potential in A-Level Drama

1. Always be on time to lessons and rehearsals.
2. Always try your best in lessons.
3. Try always have a positive approach to whatever style of theatre we are exploring.
4. Respond positively to feedback and direction – this is given to help you improve.
5. Hand homework in on time, if there is an element you need extra support with, contact your teacher before the lesson.
6. If you are experiencing any difficulties talk to your teachers, they may be able to help.
7. Volunteer to be involved in Drama activities that happen in school.
8. Be friendly and welcoming to all group members.
9. Go and see as much live theatre as possible!
10. Enjoy yourself.

