

IGCSE DRAMA

UNIT 1: THE LANGUAGE OF DRAMA

Recommended Prior Knowledge:

There is no recommended prior knowledge or skills required in order to begin study for IGCSE Drama. However, there are a number of broad social and inter-personal skills that will be developed during the course. These include the ability to work effectively in groups, an attitude which seeks to solve problems rather than merely identify them and an ability to be a reflective learner.

In terms of dramatic repertoire, it is assumed that students will have studied English Literature at the equivalent of the UK Key Stage 3 of the National Curriculum English requirements and that by means of this will already be familiar with a number of dramatic texts.

This is the first Unit and does not assume the study of any other Unit in advance of this.

Context:

It would be best if this unit were taught at the start of the course since it develops skills and approaches which provide a firm foundation for all of the other units. This being the case, it would be advisable if slightly longer is allowed for the delivery of this unit than for the others since students in the group are likely to have had differing experiences of drama and developing performance skills is a process that requires a significant amount of time. In some circumstances a whole term could be spent on this unit but this will depend on the overall amount of time available for the course.

Outline:

This unit centres on a number of workshops designed to introduce students to the key concepts of practical drama and to enable them to devise short pieces that utilise these skills. The workshops are all intended to be group-based although in larger Centres it is envisaged that there may be a need to split the group to ensure that all students have an opportunity to participate fully in the activities.

| Learning Outcomes | Suggested Teaching Activities | Resources |
|---|--|--|
| <p>1 Acquire skills in practical drama and understand appropriate technical terminology</p> | <p>Organise a series of workshops in which each one explores practically a key concept in drama.</p> <p>The sequence of workshops should aim to build up a practical understanding of drama skills on a weekly basis.</p> <p><i>Characterisation and Role</i> Students work in groups to establish different types of roles and different characters.</p> <p><i>Physicality</i> Students are introduced to ways of creating a character through physical expression, gesture and posture.</p> <p><i>Pacing, Contrast and Dynamics</i> Students take very short extracts of text and work on ways in which dramatic effects can be created through changes in pacing, contrast and dynamics.</p> <p><i>Tension</i> Students should be introduced to ways of creating moments of heightened dramatic tension to create an effective dramatic message.</p> <p><i>Spatial awareness and proxemics</i> Students should be introduced to ways of using the performance space available to them and the way in which different spaces can be used to create different effects. Workshops should also explore the spatial relationships between the characters in their drama.</p> | <p>The following web sites and publications contain useful ideas for exploring the introductory stages of drama for IGCSE.</p> <p>http://www.dramateachers.co.uk/</p> <p>http://webtech.kennesaw.edu/jcheek4/drama.htm</p> <p>http://www.tes.co.uk/section/staffroom/list_threads.aspx?path=/drama</p> <p>http://www.teachit.co.uk/index.asp</p> <p>http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/documents/publications/460.doc</p> <p>Pymm, 2004 , pp. 25 -33</p> <p>Cross & Reynolds, 2002, pp. 32 -35</p> |

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| 2 | Demonstrate skills in structuring a piece of drama | Work in groups on a number (around 6) of short practical drama pieces where the form is prescribed for the students. A variety of forms should be explored (e.g. ternary form ABA where each section is no longer than 30 seconds; seven-line dialogue for two characters in which one character has the final say). These pieces might be regarded as practical exercises in which skills are developed rather than finished pieces. | Cross & Reynolds, 2002, pp. 87 – 97 Neelands & Goode, 2000 - there is a good selection of ideas in this book regarding means of structuring drama |
| 3 | Understanding dramatic terms and how to use them when writing about drama | Students practise writing a paragraph after each workshop in which they must demonstrate their understanding of how to use terms correctly. Use short answer questions to allow students an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of dramatic terms. | Pymm, 2004 , glossary pp. 138 - 143 |