

# Year 11-12 Transition Booklet

Hello!

In this booklet you will find a variety of tasks, designed to help you prepare for A-Level Drama and Theatre. There are research tasks, revision tasks, plays to read and plays to watch. These can be completed in any order you like, at any time. If there is something you are struggling with, feel free to move on to another task or send me an email.

As some of the tasks require you to write on the booklet itself, it might be worth making your own copy of it (go to 'File' and 'Make a copy'). If you do this, add your name below and then share your version with me. Please be aware, though, that I may update this document occasionally, so check back to the original from time-to-time to make sure you don't miss anything.

If there is anything else you would like to work on before September, let me know and I will try to accommodate it.

Thank you!

Mr Wynn

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Stage Positions and Staging Types

*GCSE Revision / Component 1*

These tasks are primarily for those who did not study Drama as a GCSE. For those of you who did, it can act as a quick bit of revision.

## Stage Positions

Label the stage positions in the squares below. Use [this link](#) to help you.

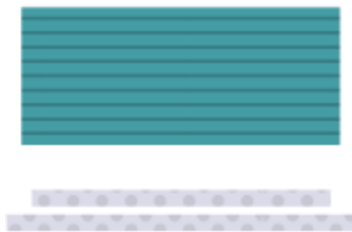

**AUDIENCE**

Then, complete the quiz [here](#).

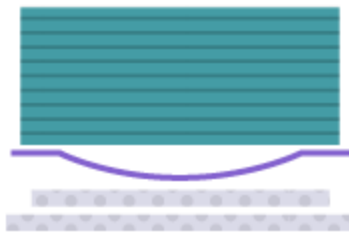
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## Staging Types

Write the correct name for each staging type shown on the following page. Use [this link](#) to help you, and also the video [here](#).



(insert name here)



(insert name here)



(insert name here)



(insert name here)



(insert name here)

The name given to the type of staging where the audience moves to follow the performers around the space is: (insert name here).

Using [this link](#) (pages 2, 3 and 4), read about the advantages and disadvantages of each staging type.

Then, complete the quiz [here](#).

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# Writing About Live Theatre

## *GCSE Revision / Component 1, Section C*

In these tasks, you will practice/revise the skills required for Section C of the A-Level Drama and Theatre written exam: Live Theatre Production. You will be asked to describe, analyse and evaluate the acting skills of one or more performer(s) in a play that you have watched.

The play we are going to use for this task is *One Man, Two Guvnors*, which was performed at the National Theatre and starred James Corden.

The scene we are going to focus on is one where Francis (played by James Corden) talks about the difficulties of having two jobs and gets into an argument with himself.

The text from the playscript is here:

FRANCIS: (*Aside.*) I've got two jobs, how did that happen? You got to concentrate ain't ya, with two jobs. Kaw! I can do it, long as I don't get confused. But I get confused easily. I don't get confused that easily. Yes I do. I'm my own worst enemy. Stop being negative. I'm not being negative. I'm being realistic. I'll screw it up. I always do. Who screws it up? You, you're the role model for village idiots everywhere. Me?! You're nothing without me. You're the cock up! Don't call *me* a cock up, you cock up!

(*He slaps himself.*) You slapped me?! Yeah, I did. And I'm glad I did. (*He punches himself back.*) That hurt. Good. You started it.

*A fight breaks out, where he ends up on the floor, and going over tables.*

You can find a link to the play [here](#). Watch the scene (in the video of Act 1, from 34 minutes and 47 seconds in). *You do not need to watch the whole show at this time unless you want to.*

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Once you have watched the scene, you are going to work towards writing an answer to the following A-Level-style question:

Briefly explain the ways in which **one or more** performer(s) used their performance skills in order to convey their character(s) at particular moments. Analyse and evaluate the contribution of your chosen performer(s) to the total dramatic effectiveness of the production.

As we are not currently watching the play as a whole, we can only respond to the first half of the task for now. Select two lines/sentences to focus on in detail. Complete the tables on the next two pages.

LINE 1	
<b>What</b> is being said? (Copy the quote from the script.)	
<b>Who</b> is saying the line?	
Who is the line <b>said to</b> ? What is the character who is speaking trying to do to the person they are speaking to? (For example, are they trying to amuse them, bully them, intimidate them, etc?)	
<b>Vocal</b> skills: What can you say about the actor's use of pitch, pace, volume, tone, pause, accent, etc. on this line?	
<b>Physical</b> skills: What can you say about the actor's use of gesture, posture, etc. on this line?	
<b>Facial expression</b> : What can you say about how the actor uses their mouth, eyes, eyebrows, etc. on this line?	
<b>Movement</b> : What can you say about the way the actor walks, their use of space, use of levels, etc. on this line?	
<b>Audience</b> : What is the effect of these choices on the audience? How does it cause them to feel about the character(s)? Did it achieve the actor's desired effect?	
<b>Question</b> : How does this link to the question being asked? In this particular case, how do these performance skills <b>convey their character</b> ?	

LINE 2	
<b>What</b> is being said? (Copy the quote from the script.)	
<b>Who</b> is saying the line?	
Who is the line <b>said to</b> ? What is the character who is speaking trying to do to the person they are speaking to? (For example, are they trying to amuse them, bully them, intimidate them, etc?)	
<b>Vocal</b> skills: What can you say about the actor's use of pitch, pace, volume, tone, pause, accent, etc. on this line?	
<b>Physical</b> skills: What can you say about the actor's use of gesture, posture, etc. on this line?	
<b>Facial expression</b> : What can you say about how the actor uses their mouth, eyes, eyebrows, etc. on this line?	
<b>Movement</b> : What can you say about the way the actor walks, their use of space, use of levels, etc. on this line?	
<b>Audience</b> : What is the effect of these choices on the audience? How does it cause them to feel about the character(s)? Did it achieve the actor's desired effect?	
<b>Question</b> : How does this link to the question being asked? In this particular case, how do these performance skills <b>convey their character</b> ?	

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Once you have completed both tables, you are going to use your points to act as a plan to help you answer the first part of the A-Level-style question:

Briefly explain the ways in which **one or more** performer(s) used their performance skills in order to convey their character(s) at particular moments. Analyse and evaluate the contribution of your chosen performer(s) to the total dramatic effectiveness of the production.

You are going to write an introductory paragraph, followed by two detailed paragraphs in which you talk about each of your chosen lines.

**Paragraph 1:** What play did you watch? Describe your initial thoughts about the character you are going to focus on. (This paragraph doesn't need to be more than a couple of lines).

**Paragraph 2:** Using your notes in the first table, talk in detail about your first chosen line. Talk about how it helped James Corden convey his character and talk about how successful James Corden was in playing this character for the audience.

**Paragraph 3:** Do the same as paragraph 2, but for your second chosen line.

If you would like to add a fourth paragraph, either focusing on a third line or concluding your answer, you are very welcome to.

We will focus on the second part of the question in class, when we have watched a full production together.



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# Theatre Practitioners

## *Components 2 and 3*

In many ways, A-Level Drama and Theatre follows the same structure as GCSE Drama: It is divided into three sections - the written exam, the devised piece (with accompanying rehearsal logbook) and the scripted performance. One of the key differences, however, is that the latter two components require you to perform *in the style of a theatre practitioner*. There is a list of prescribed practitioners, set by the exam board; we will study the work of at least four of these.

Conduct some research into the following theatre makers: **Frantic Assembly**, **Kneehigh**, **Alecky Blythe** and **Max Stafford-Clark**. Note down what you learn about each of them.

I have included some links below to get you started.

### **Frantic Assembly**

- [franticassembly.co.uk](http://franticassembly.co.uk)
- The Frantic Assembly Podcast, available on [Spotify](#), [iTunes](#), [Acast](#) and [Soundcloud](#).
- [This essay on the history of Frantic Assembly, by Digital Theatre.](#)
- [This production of Love Song by Frantic Assembly.](#)
- More links and resources for Frantic Assembly can also be found on page 12 of this booklet, with a particular focus on the play *Things I Know to be True*.

### **Kneehigh**

- [kneehigh.co.uk](http://kneehigh.co.uk)
- [This essay on the history of Kneehigh, by Digital Theatre.](#)

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- [This guide to the style of Kneehigh, by Digital Theatre.](#)

### **Alecky Blythe**

- [This interview with Alecky Blythe](#), in which she discussed her craft.
- [This essay on the history of verbatim theatre, by Digital Theatre.](#) There is a particular focus on Blythe's work on page 4.
- [This trailer for the film version of \*London Road\*](#), a verbatim musical created by Alecky Blythe and first performed at the National Theatre.

### **Max Stafford-Clark**

- [This webpage](#), which describes the process of Actioning a script, with an accompanying video of Max Stafford-Clark rehearsing a scene with this technique.
- [This education pack](#), which details the history of Max Stafford-Clark and Out of Joint theatre company.

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# Greek Theatre

## *Component 1, Section A*

As part of the study of our first set text, *Antigone*, you will be required to do some research into Greek theatre. At A-Level, there is an increased emphasis on social and historical contextual understanding, compared to what was required at GCSE. We will look at the specifics relating to *Antigone* in class - however, as a starting point, it would be helpful for you to have some understanding of Greek theatre in general.

I have included some links below as a starting point - make notes on what you learn.

- [‘An Introduction to Greek Theatre’ video](#), from the National Theatre
- [‘An Introduction to Greek Tragedy’ video](#), from the National Theatre
- [‘Crash Course Theater’ video](#)
- [‘The Greatest Theatre’ video](#)
- [A website detailing elements on Greek Theatre](#)

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# ‘Things I Know to be True’

## *Component 1, Section C*

We will study several plays as possibilities for Section C of the written exam, in which you analyse and evaluate the acting in a production you have watched. The first play we will study is likely to be *Things I Know to be True*, as we can do this alongside our study of Frantic Assembly theatre company (who created the show).

In preparation for this, I would like you to do the following:

- [Read the play](#). Please be aware that, although the play has just been approved as a set-text at GCSE as well as being available for study at A-Level, it does contain some very strong language.
- [Watch these interviews and video clips on the making of the production](#).

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# Shakespeare Monologues

## *Component 3*

- Go to the '[Shakespeare's Monologues](#)' website and find one or more monologues that you would be interested in exploring in class.
- If you are struggling with understanding the language, use [Sparknotes](#) to find a modern translation of the speech. Bear in mind, though, that Shakespeare's language often provides the actor with several interpretations of words and phrases, so this may be only one of several possibilities.
- Watch performances of your chosen monologue(s) on YouTube.

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# Additional Resources and Tasks

## *Components 1, 2 and 3*

- [Read the specification for A-Level Drama and Theatre](#) to get an idea of what the course entails.
- [Read the sample question paper](#) to get an idea of what the questions on the written exam are like.
- [Sign up to the 'Playgroup' with Nick Hern Books](#). Each week, they are making one play free to download as an eBook. You can then read it and discuss it the following week in a live Q&A with the author.
- Watch a play online. As well as the productions already mentioned and linked to in the booklet (*Love Song* by Frantic Assembly, *Wise Children* and *One Man, Two Guvnors* at the National Theatre), I have included a list of possibilities below - please be aware that this list is not complete, though, and there are many more available online. I will try to update this list regularly so, if you have copied this booklet, check the original document now and then to see if any others have been added. Please also be aware that some of these productions contain strong language and/or mature themes.
  - [Teachers](#) by Blackeyed Theatre
  - *Jane Eyre* at the National Theatre (Act One [here](#) and Act Two [here](#))
  - [Lights Over Tesco Car Park](#) by Poltergeist Theatre
  - *Flowers for Mrs Harris* at Chichester Festival Theatre (Act One [here](#) and Act Two [here](#))
  - [Bound](#) at Southwark Playhouse
  - [Girls Like That](#) at the Unicorn Theatre
  - *Translations* at the National Theatre (Act One [here](#) and Act Two [here](#))
  - *Small Island* at the National Theatre (Act One [here](#) and Act Two [here](#))
  - [Tiger Country](#) at Hampstead Theatre
  - [The Race](#) by Gecko Theatre
  - [Amsterdam](#) at the Orange Tree Theatre
  - [The Unknown Island](#) at the Gate Theatre

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- Listen to plays online. (Audible.com has some great plays you can listen to - or, if you want to listen for free, go to Spotify and search for 'LA Theatre Works')
  - Find some interesting devising stimulus. For Component 2 of the A-Level, you will be creating a play which you will perform, while keeping a logbook of the rehearsal process. These plays will be built from an initial starting point: a piece of stimulus that inspires you. It could be a picture, a news article, a poem, a song, a theme - anything at all, really. Begin collating stimuli - make a note of any things that you think would make an interesting starting point for creating a play. When doing this, keep a specific record of where you have found these things - website addresses, book titles and authors, etc.
  - [Watch this video](#), created by Simon Stone (who adapted and directed a production of *Yerma* which we are likely to study at some point over the next two years).