New Line Learning Academy
Believe and Achieve

Drama

Drama Intent	Year 8
IMAGE FOR THAT DEPARTMENT	The Performing Arts department aims to deliver outstanding lessons that promote confidence, creativity, teamwork, and communication skills. We pride ourselves on promoting the school's ethos of **'Believe and Achieve'** and aim to develop pupils' resilience. As well as focusing on these key life skills, pupils will also develop specialised skills within each discipline of dance, drama, and music. These skills are mastered through a personalised learning approach for all pupils and the wide range of performance opportunities the department has to offer. The Drama department aims to deliver a curriculum that enables pupils to experience a wide range of theatrical styles, genres, and practitioners while exploring their links to society and culture. Pupils develop their performance and creative skills through acting, devising, script work are encouraged to develop confidence, creativity, communication, and teamwork through practical and collaborative activities. Pupils are encouraged to participate in extracurricular opportunities, including drama clubs, school productions, and performance events, to extend their learning beyond the classroom. These experiences help to develop leadership, resilience, and a passion for the performing arts. The curriculum is designed to prepare and inspire students to access Key Stage 4 Drama courses, additional performing arts qualifications, and post-16 pathways in Drama and the Performing Arts.
Term 1 and Term 2 Topic/Theme/Enquiry	**Pantomime**
Big Picture *What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?*	

Drama Unit Overview

This unit develops pupils' performance skills through a practical exploration of physical theatre and pantomime. Students will continue to investigate each element of **F.U.E.L B.A.G** (Facial expressions, Use of voice, Energy and focus, Levels, Body Language, Audience, and Gesture), applying these techniques with greater intention and control.

Building on this, students will explore how to enhance their performances through **emotion, exaggeration, expression**, all of which are essential features of the pantomime style. They will learn how to deliberately heighten performance choices to suit an audience-led, comedic theatre style. A key focus of this block is how performers can use **movement** as a storytelling tool. Students will develop their physical expression through posture, gesture, timing, and exaggerated movement to communicate character, emotion, and narrative clearly to an audience.

Core Concepts of the Unit

- Physical performance skills (movement, gesture, body language)
- Characterisation through physicality and expression
- Use of F.U.E.L B.A.G performance elements
- Exaggeration and stylisation of movement and emotion
- Audience awareness and interaction (pantomime conventions)
- Clarity of storytelling through non-verbal communication
- Ensemble work and shared performance energy

By the end of the unit, pupils will be able to combine technical performance skills with expressive movement and stylised acting to create engaging pantomime performances that are clear, dynamic, and audience focused.

	Zoom In *What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?*

Knowledge

Throughout this unit, students will build upon their prior understanding of the F.U.E.L B.A.G framework, strengthening their knowledge of how each element supports more refined and effective performance.

Students will also extend their knowledge of key performance concepts such as exaggeration, emotion, expression, and movement, understanding how these are essential in pantomime style theatre. They will explore how performers deliberately heighten these elements to create clear, engaging performances for an audience. Alongside this, they will develop understanding of how techniques such as hot seating and role on the wall can be used more analytically to explore and refine character choices.

Skills

They will develop their ability to use exaggeration effectively within pantomime style performance, ensuring clarity and impact for an audience. Students will also strengthen their capacity to sustain convincing characterisation through emotion and expression, adapting their performance choices in response to direction and feedback.

Through practical work, students will further develop their use of hot seating and role on the wall to deepen character understanding and justify performance decisions. They will also enhance their ability to evaluate their own and others' performances using accurate drama terminology, identifying strengths and areas for development with increasing independence.

Key Vocabulary

Students will continue to use and apply the F.U.E.L B.A.G framework vocabulary with greater precision and understanding. They will also extend their use of performance terminology including exaggeration, expression, emotion, movement, characterisation, and pantomime style.

In addition, students will confidently use drama process language such as exaggeration, emotion, expression, movement, hot seating, role on the wall, improvisation, and reflection vocabulary including feedback, target, development, refinement, performance quality, and evaluation.

	Pre-Requisite Knowledge *What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?*		**Pitch Up** *How will we challenge ourselves?*
Students will build upon their prior knowledge of the drama elements within FUEL BAG, developing a deeper understanding of how these can be applied effectively in performance. They will also draw on previously		Teachers will maintain high expectations for all students, challenging them to refine and extend their practical and creative skills to reach their full potential. Throughout the scheme of learning, students will develop a broad range of performance and	

learned drama techniques, such as freeze frames and the devising process, to support the creation and refinement of their work. While these specific areas are not directly assessed within this scheme of work, they will contribute significantly to students' overall performance skills and confidence in drama.	devising techniques, alongside subject-specific terminology, and will be encouraged to apply these in increasingly complex and unfamiliar dramatic contexts. Students will also engage with a wider range of creative problems, , and creating original performances that combine multiple drama conventions. Opportunities such as the School of Excellence programme provide further challenge, enabling students to develop advanced performance, collaboration, and devising skills beyond the classroom.
Wider Framework *How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?*	**Curriculum Hinterland** *What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?*
Students will develop this strand of skills consistently across all units of work, as they form fundamental core skills within the subject. In Year 9 scripted units, pupils are expected to apply these skills effectively when interpreting and performing text, demonstrating increasing control and understanding in performance. These skills also directly support Component 2 of BTEC Performing Arts, which focuses on the development and application of characterisation, requiring pupils to create believable and sustained characters through informed creative choices.	Students will engage with a rich history of performance culture that dates back to Ancient Greek civilisation and beyond. They will develop an appreciation of how storytelling has evolved over time, with a particular focus on the role of physical theatre as a powerful form of communication. This will enable students to understand how contemporary performance is influenced by historical traditions and how meaning can be conveyed effectively through movement, gesture, and non-verbal expression.
Authentic connections *How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?*	
The Drama curriculum links significantly to the KS3 English National Curriculum, promoting pupils to develop skills in oracy and textual understanding, as well as performance. Through the exploration of a range of different contexts and cultures, pupils are encouraged to understand and appreciate the perspective of others. Through regular group work and collaboration, pupils will be encouraged to be respectful of other's ideas.	
Resources *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*	**Assessment** *How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?*

• https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7b8761ed915d4147620f6b/SECONDARY_national_curriculum_-_English2.pdf • Stimulus, initial response and ideas - Creating a portfolio or devising log - AQA - GCSE Drama Revision - AQA - BBC Bitesize • Drama styles - Background - Higher English Revision - BBC Bitesize	The end of unit assessment will involve practical performance. **Substantive Knowledge – 36%** Students will be assessed via rapid recalls and exit tickets in each lesson and an end of unit theory assessment involving multiple choice and open-ended questions. **Disciplinary Knowledge – 64%** Students will be assessed via a practical assessment observing their performance skills, vocal skills and physical skills and a reflection questionnaire involving open-ended questions based on their strengths, weaknesses and targets for the next unit. Throughout the topic, students will be assessed via: • Rapid recalls at the start of every lesson. • Visual assessment and feedback throughout each lesson. • Exit tickets at the end of every lesson. • Peer and self-assessment. • End of unit assessment via practical and theory assessments.

Term 3 and 4 Topic/Theme/Enquiry		**Scripted theatre**
	Big Picture *What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?*	

Drama Unit Overview

This unit introduces students to a range of core dramatic conventions and performance techniques that underpin both scripted and devised theatre. Students will explore how meaning is created on stage through the use of tension-building strategies, including split stage, cross-cutting, and chorus work, as well as collaborative techniques such as shoaling, which support ensemble storytelling and the development of shared ideas.
Alongside this, students will engage with scripted performance elements, focusing on character development, set and plot structure, and setting, in order to understand how playwrights communicate meaning through text and staging decisions.
These techniques are taught to build students' understanding of how drama is constructed and how different theatrical choices influence an audience's interpretation. By combining both devised and scripted approaches, students develop versatility as performers and gain insight into how professional theatre makers create layered, engaging performances.

Core Concepts of the Unit

- Creating and sustaining tension in performance
- Using structure and staging conventions (split stage, cross-cutting, chorus) to communicate meaning
- Developing believable characterisation through scripted work
- Understanding how set, plot, and setting shape audience response
- Collaborative performance-making and ensemble skills (e.g. shoaling)

Big Questions

- How do theatre makers build and maintain tension for an audience?
- How does structure influence meaning in performance?
- How can scripted and devised techniques be combined effectively?
- What makes a character believable and engaging on stage?
- How do staging choices change the way an audience interprets a story?

	Zoom In *What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?*

Drama

Knowledge
Students will develop an understanding of key dramatic techniques and conventions, including how tension is created and sustained in performance, and how staging choices such as split stage and crosscutting are used to communicate meaning. They will also explore collaborative approaches such as shoaling and chorus work, alongside scripted elements including character, set, plot, and setting. This knowledge helps students understand how theatre is constructed and how meaning is communicated to an audience.

Skills
Students will develop the ability to apply these techniques practically in both devised and scripted performance work. They will work collaboratively to create effective ensemble pieces, make purposeful performance choices, and adapt their work in response to stimulus, feedback, and reflection. Students will also develop evaluative skills, enabling them to reflect on their own and others' performances and identify areas for improvement.

Key Vocabulary
tension, split stage, cross-cutting, shoaling, chorus, character, set, plot, setting, convention, structure, ensemble, collaboration, interpretation, audience, intention, communicate, evaluate, refine, impact, atmosphere

Pre-Requisite Knowledge
What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Students were introduced in Year 7 to scripts and their key features, including stage directions and how these inform performance choices. They also developed foundational understanding of characterisation through FUEL BAG and the Three E's, supporting the creation of engaging and believable performance. In this unit, students are expected to build on this prior learning and apply these concepts effectively when developing and performing characters in both scripted and practical work.

Pitch Up
How will we challenge ourselves?

Students will be challenged to move beyond basic performance of a script and instead focus on deeper interpretation and purposeful decision-making. They will be expected to justify how and why they use techniques such as FUEL BAG and the Three E's, explaining how these choices communicate character and intention to an audience. Rather than simply performing lines, students will explore subtext, motivation, and relationships, making performance choices that are sustained and consistent throughout.

Wider Framework
How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?

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Students will develop this strand of skills across all units of work, as they form essential foundational competencies within the subject. This consistent progression ensures that students build secure knowledge and practical understanding that can be applied in increasingly complex performance contexts. In Year 9, when exploring different types of theatre, students will deepen their understanding of key narrative elements such as plot and setting, and how these contribute to meaning across a range of theatrical styles. This directly supports their ability to analyse and interpret performance work at a more sophisticated level. This learning provides a clear foundation for progression along the curriculum roadmap, particularly into the BTEC Performing Arts course. In particular, it supports Component 1, where students analyse performance styles and practitioners, and Component 2, where they must apply their understanding of character, style, and structure in their own practical work. A secure grasp of these concepts ensures students are well-prepared for end points that require both analytical depth and practical application in performance creation.	Students will engage with a rich history of performance culture that dates back to Ancient Greek civilisation and beyond. They will develop an appreciation of how storytelling has evolved over time, with a particular focus on the role of physical theatre as a powerful form of communication. This will enable students to understand how contemporary performance is influenced by historical traditions and how meaning can be conveyed effectively through movement, gesture, and non-verbal expression.

Authentic connections
How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?

The drama curriculum can play a vital role in supporting social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) by offering students a safe space to express feelings, explore different perspectives, and build empathy. Through role-play, storytelling, and collaborative work, drama helps students process emotions, develop self-awareness, and strengthen communication skills. It boosts confidence and resilience, giving young people tools to cope with challenges both inside and outside of school. Engaging in drama can reduce anxiety, promote a sense of belonging, and empower students to find their voice, making it a valuable contributor to overall well-being.

Resources *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*	**Resources** *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*

• https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7b8761ed915d4147620f6b/SECONDARY_national_curriculum_-_English2.pdf • Stimulus, initial response and ideas - Creating a portfolio or devising log - AQA - GCSE Drama Revision - AQA - BBC Bitesize • Drama styles - Background - Higher English Revision - BBC Bitesize	The end of unit assessment will involve practical performance. **Substantive Knowledge – 36%** Students will be assessed via rapid recalls and exit tickets in each lesson and an end of unit theory assessment involving multiple choice and open-ended questions. **Disciplinary Knowledge – 64%** Students will be assessed via a practical assessment observing their performance skills, vocal skills and physical skills and a reflection questionnaire involving open-ended questions based on their strengths, weaknesses and targets for the next unit. Throughout the topic, students will be assessed via: • Rapid recalls at the start of every lesson. • Visual assessment and feedback throughout each lesson. • Exit tickets at the end of every lesson. • Peer and self-assessment. • End of unit assessment via practical and theory assessments.

Term 5 and 6 Topic/Theme/Enquiry		**Devising - Gangs**

Big Picture
What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

This unit focuses on devising performance work around the theme of gangs, using drama as a tool to explore narrative, storytelling, atmosphere, and symbolism. Students will develop an understanding of how theatre makers construct meaning through devised performance, using both physical and vocal techniques to communicate complex ideas and social issues.

Students will explore how narrative structure can be developed from a stimulus, how storytelling can be shaped through ensemble work, and how atmosphere can be created to influence audience response. They will also investigate how symbolism can be used to communicate deeper meaning and represent ideas beyond literal interpretation, particularly when exploring sensitive or real-world themes such as gang culture.
This unit challenges students to think creatively and critically about how drama can reflect society, while developing their ability to work collaboratively and respond to a stimulus in a sophisticated and meaningful way.

Core Concepts
narrative construction, storytelling techniques, atmosphere, symbolism, ensemble performance, tension, character relationships, social context, audience impact, interpretation

Zoom In
What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Students develop an understanding of how devised theatre is created from a stimulus, specifically focusing on the theme of gangs as a social issue. They learn how narrative is structured in performance, including the use of beginning, development, climax, and resolution, as well as non-linear approaches such as flashbacks and fragmented storytelling.
Students explore how meaning is communicated through atmosphere and tension, and how performance choices such as physicality, vocal expression, staging, and pacing influence audience response. They also study how symbolism can be used to represent abstract ideas such as power, loyalty, conflict, and consequence, particularly within real-world contexts.
Throughout the scheme, students learn how ensemble devising works, including how ideas are generated, shared, refined, and structured into a coherent performance.

Students apply creative and analytical thinking to interpret stimuli and shape performance material. They make purposeful decisions about narrative structure, selecting and organising ideas to communicate meaning effectively to an audience.
They experiment with techniques to create atmosphere and tension, adjusting pace, rhythm, and spatial relationships to manipulate audience response.
Students also make interpretative choices about symbolism, justifying how and why meaning is communicated beyond the literal.
Working collaboratively, students develop ensemble skills by contributing to group ideas, refining performance work, responding to feedback, and adapting their work to improve clarity, cohesion, and dramatic impact. They also evaluate their own and others' work, reflecting on how effectively meaning has been communicated.

Key Vocabulary
Narrative, stimulus, interpretation, atmosphere, tension, mood, impact, audience, perception, symbolism, abstract, communicate, influence,

Pre-Requisite Knowledge
What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Students have previously developed a range of foundational drama skills that directly support this unit on devising theatre around gangs.

Pitch Up
How will we challenge ourselves?

To add depth, students will be required to apply their understanding of narrative, atmosphere, and symbolism to unfamiliar performance scenarios, such as retelling

They have been introduced to key performance techniques such as freeze frames, physical storytelling, and basic devising processes, which have helped them understand how meaning can be communicated without relying solely on scripted dialogue. They also have prior experience of working with stimuli to generate ideas, enabling them to begin shaping simple narratives collaboratively.	the same story from multiple perspectives (e.g. victim, perpetrator, bystander), or transforming a linear narrative into a fragmented or non-linear structure. They may also be challenged to communicate the same theme using restrictions, such as minimal dialogue, still image sequences, or physical theatre only, requiring more precise and thoughtful performance choices. Students will also be expected to engage in deeper analysis by justifying how their creative decisions shape audience interpretation. This includes evaluating how tone shifts, contrasts in mood, and staging choices influence emotional response, and how meaning can change depending on how a scene is structured or performed.
Wider Framework *How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?*	**Wider Framework** *How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?*
Through devising theatre around the theme of gangs, students strengthen their ability to create structured narratives, develop believable characters, and use performance techniques such as atmosphere, tension, and symbolism to communicate meaning. These are core transferable skills that underpin all future study in drama and performing arts. This learning directly prepares students for more demanding work in Year 9, where they will explore a wider range of theatre styles and begin to apply techniques with greater sophistication and independence. Students will be expected to analyse how professional theatre is constructed and adapt their own performance work to different genres, stimuli, and stylistic constraints.	Students will engage with a rich history of performance culture that dates back to Ancient Greek civilisation and beyond. They will develop an appreciation of how storytelling has evolved over time, with a particular focus on the role of physical theatre as a powerful form of communication. This will enable students to understand how contemporary performance is influenced by historical traditions and how meaning can be conveyed effectively through movement, gesture, and non-verbal expression.
Authentic connections *How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?*	
TEAMWORK LISTENING SPEAKING	The drama curriculum lays a strong foundation for careers in the performing arts industry, preparing students for paths such as acting, directing, stage management, playwriting, and drama teaching. It also develops highly transferable skills like communication, creativity, teamwork, problem-solving, and confidence, which are invaluable in any profession. Whether students pursue work in media, law, education, public relations, or business, the skills honed through drama—

such as presenting ideas clearly, thinking creatively under pressure, and collaborating effectively—equip them for success in a wide range of careers.

	Resources *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*		**Resources** *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*
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