



"It's definitely a confidence booster and you get to work with all kinds of people!"

Year 12 Drama Student

Drama and Theatre Studies Course Overview (AQA)

As well as studying a variety of play texts and theatre productions during this two-year course, you will also be offered a wide range of opportunities that promote creativity, insightfulness and critical thinking, and allow personal development through teamwork and reflective practice.

Component 1: Drama and Theatre (80 marks: 40% of A Level)

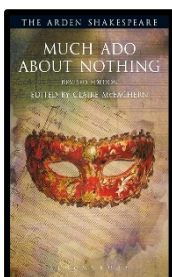
This is **the written component** of the course and it is divided into three compulsory sections, which you will study during the two-year course: **Section A: Drama through the Ages** (*Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare); **Section B: 20th and 21st Century Drama** (*Brontë* by Polly Teale); **Section C: Live Theatre Production**.

In this exam, you will be assessed on your knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is **developed** and **performed**, as well as your ability to **analyse** and **evaluate** the live theatre work of others.

You will be expected to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the subject content. In developing your knowledge and skills as theatre practitioners, you will need to support your creative ideas with close reference to the text; support design questions with sketches and/or diagrams; and make specific reference to the social, cultural or historical context of the texts studied.

For this exam, you will be given a **clean copy of the play** you have studied in order to support the extracts and questions given. The exam lasts three hours, and you will sit the paper in the **summer term of Year 13**.

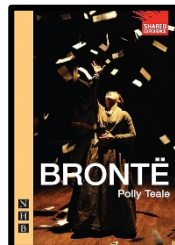
Section A: Drama through the Ages



Much Ado About Nothing
by William Shakespeare

Section A is marked out of 25. The focus of the questions is **interpretation** of specific aspects of the play adopting the perspective of a **performer**, designer or **director** as appropriate to the question.

Section B: 20th and 21st Century Drama



Brontë
by Polly Teale

Section B is marked out of 30. The focus of the questions is how the extract might be **interpreted** in performance to **create meaning** for an audience. You will have to answer questions from the perspectives of a **director**, **performer** and **designer**.

Component 2: Creating Original Drama (60 marks: 30% of A Level)

This is a **practical component** during which, you will **create your own pieces of theatre** and **produce a Working Notebook**. The Working Notebook will be produced during your devising process and it will document your research, practical explorations and reflections on your piece. The **final performance is marked out of 20**, and the **Working Notebook is marked out of 40**.

In this component, you will be assessed on your ability to **create and develop ideas to communicate meaning** as part of the theatre making process, making **connections between dramatic theory and practice**, and **applying theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions** in a live performance.

The devising process and the final performance is a collaborative project, but you will receive **individual marks** in the final assessment of your work. Many of our students choose **performance** as their specialism, but director and design (lighting, sound, set, costumes, puppets) specialism can be assessed in this component. The piece must be informed by the methodologies of one **AQA prescribed practitioner**, with Frantic Assembly, Kneehigh and The Paper Birds, being used effectively and successfully by students in recent years.



For examination, your final piece will be **performed to an audience in December of Year 13**. This component (final performance and Working Notebook) is **marked by teachers and moderated by AQA**.

Component 3: Making Theatre (60 marks: 30% of A Level)

This is also a **practical component** where you will be assessed on your ability to **apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions** in live performance, and **analyse and evaluate your own work**.

For this component, you will **practically explore (workshop) and interpret three key extracts** from three different plays. Whilst exploring these plays practically, you will be expected to write your ideas and interpretations of the plays/extracts having **studied and applied the theories and methodologies of a prescribed theatre practitioner** – this will form and help you to produce your Reflective Report. Of the three extracts, only **Extract 3 must have one of AQA's prescribed practitioners**, but their methodologies can be applied to all extracts. Our chosen practitioner is **Katie Mitchell**.



Extract 3 is formally presented to the Examiner in April of Year 13. You will also **submit your Reflective Report to be marked by the Examiner**. This piece of written work will include an **analysis and evaluation of your own theatrical interpretations** of all three extracts (and plays) studied. The **performance of Extract 3 is marked out of 40** and the **Reflective Report is marked out of 20**.

What do A Level Drama lessons look like?

The A Level Drama course is a step up from the GCSE Drama course. We cover the same skillset at a much deeper and richer level and we continue to **push the boundaries of what theatre is and what it can be**. There is much more emphasis on you as an independent learner, as you have lots of opportunity to explore different practitioners, styles and methodologies allowing you to broaden your knowledge and passion for Drama and Theatre.



Drama Beyond Sixth Form: Careers and Future Aspirations

Drama and Theatre Studies aids the development of a range of transferrable skills. In addition to helping you explore your creativity, Drama allows you to develop your presentation and team work skills, as well as helping you to develop your confidence and empathy with others.

Self-expression, creativity and critical thinking are the foundation of academic performance across many other subject areas, and so by taking A Level Drama and Theatre Studies, you will be fully prepared with lifelong, transferrable skills.

Students who study Drama and Theatre Studies go to on complete further study and pursue careers in Arts Management, Management Consultancy, Journalism, Broadcasting/Media, Law, Marketing, Creative Writing and Teaching.



Top Tips and Advice from Year 12 Drama Students

"As an external student, Drama has allowed me to collaborate with others which has opened doors to form new friendships."

"Just enjoy it. Year 12 goes by so fast, but you can make great friends in Drama."

"Make the most of the opportunities outside school – National Theatre, Digital Theatre Plus and Theatre Trips."

"Even if you are scared, go for it! Have confidence in your ideas and opinions because no-one will judge you!"

"Don't be afraid to immerse yourself in the subject, and put forward your ideas."

What can I do to get ahead over the summer?

So as to prepare for the A Level Course, there are lots of valuable resources that you can utilise to read around the subject area and begin to develop an awareness and an understanding of some of the theatre practitioners and companies that you will study and explore.



Research Theatre Practitioners:

- **Frantic Assembly:** www.franticassembly.co.uk
- **The Paper Birds:** <https://www.thepaperbirds.com/>
- **Kneehigh Theatre:** <https://thisiskneehigh.co.uk/>
- **Punchdrunk:** <https://www.punchdrunk.com/>
- **Katie Mitchell:** <https://www.practitioners-in-practice-katie-mitchell-pdf/>
- **Shared Experience:** <https://www.sharedexperience.org.uk/>



Explore Theatre Platforms:

- **National Theatre:** <https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/>
- **RSC:** <https://www.rsc.org.uk/>
- **Digital Theatre:** <https://www.digitaltheatre.com/>
- **UK Theatre:** <https://uktheatre.org/>



Listen to Podcasts:

- **BBC Sounds: Drama on 3:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/b006tnwj>
- **BBC Sounds: Black British Theatre and Screens:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/b006tnwj>
- **BBC Sounds: Mediocre White Male:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001vzxs>

Tasks for September 2027:

- ✓ Read the introduction to 'The Director's Craft' by Katie Mitchell (can be loaned from department).
- ✓ Make Cornell Notes about one performer in a production that you have seen live or streamed (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErSjc1PEGKE>)
- ✓ Watch 'Polly Teale – What is 'Real'? (Brontë): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ad5lwfwy2Cs>
- ✓ Watch 'The Role of the Director' (MAAN): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXDI_WqFQB0

✓ Watch 'The Actors' Process' (MAAN): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4H2buTE8Uk>

We very much look forward to welcoming you to the Drama Department in September! ☺