



...Investigating **DRAMA**



Higher Drama and
Advanced Higher Drama

Support material for teachers and students



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This website gives access to national qualifications arrangements documents, subject reviews and updates.

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investigating drama

**APPROACHES TO
INVESTIGATIVE AND DEvised DRAMA
IN SCOTTISH SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of drama in Scottish secondary schools focuses on:

- Creating
- Presenting
- Evaluating

In engaging with these elements, students at **all** stages are encouraged to develop their own dramas from ideas which are prompted by a variety of stimuli. From a wide range of starting points, students work through the process of creating a drama from first thoughts to presentation.

At Higher and Advanced Higher level the process is no different but, necessarily, the quality of the final product is more refined and complex as a result of students continuing to develop a higher level of skills and the progression achieved through each course of study.

THIS PUBLICATION

Through the DVD production and accompanying printed materials, this publication offers approaches to teaching ***Devised Drama at Advanced Higher level and Investigative Drama at Higher level.***

The aim of the **DVD** presentation is to provide viewers with illustrations of how teachers and pupils in two Scottish secondary schools set about responding to the creative challenges of developing Investigative Drama and Devised Drama.

A further chapter in the DVD aims to illustrate a professional theatre group's use of theatre arts with particular focus on lighting design.

The aim of the **printed material** is to highlight key points and issues arising from the DVD presentation as well as to encourage reflection and evaluation. The aim of the appendices to the printed material is to illustrate processes which supported the pupils' creative responses. Appendix I also contains a student evaluation.

The DVD uses the familiar “chapter” format and is structured around three separate drama presentation challenges:

- Developing Devised Drama (Advanced Higher)

From Holy Rood High School, Edinburgh : an illustration of processes used in teaching Devised Drama, including a full example of one student’s production.

- Developing Investigative Drama (Higher)

From Lockerbie Academy : an illustration of processes used in teaching Investigative Drama using “Men Should Weep” as a textual stimulus.

- Developing a Professional Production

From the TAG Theatre Company : a focus on Theatre Arts as illustrated by their approach to staging a production of “A Taste of Honey” written by Shelagh Delaney. Special attention is given to the use of lighting for the creation of appropriate dramatic mood.

Each of the above chapters can be viewed in its entirety but, using the DVD menu, viewers can access subsections of each chapter as required. It is hoped that all of the material will be used by teachers and students as the basis for discussion.

FOCUS ON DIRECTING

At both Higher and Advanced Higher levels, there is a fuller emphasis than in earlier stages of the secondary school on the skills of **directing**. Although students studying Drama at Intermediate levels 1 and 2 require to take individual responsibility for a scene or section, in Standard Grade, students spend time in discussion before arriving at a **group decision** about form, structure, characterisation, technical issues and casting. By the time students reach Higher and Advanced Higher levels, they must accept **individual responsibility** for part of the group's presentation as a writer and director.

It is generally accepted that being a director involves higher order skills. To take responsibility for the creative elements of a piece of theatre is a huge challenge. Without clear guidance, students often approach the task without a clear sense of the planning and structure demanded by a successful theatrical presentation.

Without aiming to be prescriptive, the DVD production exemplifies a **structured approach** to the creative development of ideas. Such structured and well supported opportunities are crucial in developing the skills students need to progress confidently on the road to independence as directors – a journey which should show obvious progression from Investigative Drama at Higher to Devised Drama at Advanced Higher. As students increasingly achieve independence, the teacher will have more confidence to withdraw the higher levels of support which might have been necessary at the start of the process and will operate more as facilitator and consultant.



At Advanced Higher level, the approaches exemplified in this publication should offer students experiences which would enhance:

- their understanding of the direction process
- their study of the work of two practitioners to aid understanding of the creation and building of characters
- the need to communicate with actors while taking on the role of director
- the technical elements of production and their impact on a audience

At Higher level, the approaches offered in this publication should aid students in understanding:

- the need for experimentation through rehearsal
- the importance of dramatic form and structure
- a textual stimulus and the issues it raises
- the importance of giving clear instructions regarding moves and important voice comments for actors - this would also aid dramatic commentary tasks
- the use of staging, sets, props and costume to achieve appropriate audience response
- the process of evaluating the finished product

While Investigative Drama and Devised Drama can be developed as a discrete part of each course, it is crucial to realise that the experience offered - and in particular, the opportunity to develop skills as a director – greatly assists students in other aspects of their study of Drama.

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chapter 1...

ADVANCED HIGHER: DEvised DRAMA

...advanced higher: devised drama

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(A) IN THE BEGINNING – THEMES AND RESPONSES

This DVD chapter shows Advanced Higher students embarking on their Devised Drama unit.

- The class is introduced to the themes for Devised Drama and their early activities include discussion and improvisation.
- The quality of improvisation and the maturity of the comments by the students show progression from Higher level.
- There are comments about forms of staging which could be appropriate, together with some initial ideas about characterisation.
- The group approach is still used to share and develop ideas.
- An external workshop has prompted students' thinking about the development of themes.



(B) DISSOCIA WORKSHOP: EXERCISES AND THEMES



The Dissocia Workshop provides an example of how additional personnel can be used to enhance the learning experience for the students – who should also benefit from visits by actors, presentations by touring companies and/or attending outreach workshops.

The students in this group were asked to engage in a series of exercises to explore the imaginative and creative processes. This approach was used to help students think in a more abstract way when responding to the themes offered by SQA.



To focus the students' minds, they are asked to log their reactions to this exercise in three column headings;

Memory

Talk

Dreams

Students' responses to this exercise show how they have become more involved with the task and how they are able to relate the experience of the exercise to the needs of their drama in terms of emotions, relationships and character development.





(C) INTO PRODUCTION: DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING/FIRST REHEARSAL

In this section, the process of building a new Devised Drama is shown.

- In the exemplar, the student/director has a clear and positive attitude to the task.
- The student/director gives a brief outline of the plot and asks the two actors to improvise the opening.
- The student combines her study of a play by Jean-Paul Sartre, a film, and a newspaper article about a local incident - all to assist in the development of her directorial concepts.
- Props and set are to be simple to establish a scene in which the audience will be questioning where the scene is taking place.
- It is decided that lighting should be stark, eerie and with only a few simple lighting cues.
- Costume is to be used as a signifying device for the character of the doctor.
- One actor has found a piece of costume which is effective in the light and adds to the tension within the scene.



- The lead actor is able to evaluate the challenges of playing the role.

“The character was so different to characters I normally play because I never played characters like in a mental ward type thing. She’d been ill, and she’d just been attacked but she was covering up this big lie...so she’s quite hard to play.”



It should be remembered that the example given is only one of several devised dramas being developed simultaneously. This brings challenges for teachers and students. **“Probably the most challenging thing was that we were in a few plays each. Learning lines obviously was hard... and trying to direct your own play at the same time.”**

In these circumstances, students and teachers share responsibility for the management of time and resources. Particularly where a number of devised dramas are concurrently in rehearsal for final presentation, teachers should be mindful of the SQA guidelines on the duration of each.



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(D) ADVANCED HIGHER: A PRODUCTION

Following on from the observation of the director's instruction and subsequent rehearsals, we can see the result of the work of an Advanced Higher Drama student and her cast of two actors.

In evaluating the drama in terms of theme, the director's comments in the previous chapter and the technical issues which affect the presentation, the following questions might be borne in mind.

- How effective is the setting?
- Is the structure of the drama clear?
- Is the characterisation projected as the director intended?
- How effective is the costume?
- How does the lighting add to the atmosphere?
- To what extent is the theme fully explored?
- Are voice and movement appropriate for each role?

The above agenda for evaluation relates to the learning outcomes and performance criteria in the National Unit Specification: statement of standards – Devised Drama.





chapter 2...

HIGHER: INVESTIGATIVE DRAMA

...higher: investigative drama

(A) IN THE BEGINNING – GENDER ISSUES PAST AND PRESENT



The students in this group were asked to read the text “Men Should Weep” and were given scenes to direct. This approach was designed to get students actively to explore the issues in the script and to introduce them to a Scottish Contemporary Theatre text.

By using a text based approach to teaching this unit, students are introduced to understanding and interpreting the words of a playwright. They also are exposed to the structure of a script and the technical support which it demands.

After blocking with a script, the students were asked to improvise those scenes and to do some ‘hot seating’ in relation to characterisation.

Role reversal was used to explore the feelings of the characters. This keeps the actors thinking and moving.

Although students assessed the experience as “a bit of a challenge”, they also saw the advantage of it “letting you see both sides of the story”.

New ideas emerged from the improvisation “Jenny’s new job”. Direction was given on characterisation.

Students felt that the “stereotyping exercise was good”. It was also deemed to help “my thought processes - and I got more ideas from my class mates”.



In stimulating the students' creativity, the teacher uses a series of activities as follows.

- **“20 second exercise”** : to have an actor explain all they know of their character.
- **“What happened 30 years later?”** : monologue to respond to a letter written by her father unburdening himself about his relationship with his daughter.
- **“Thoughts in the head”**: to promote responses and dialogue as a means of developing the mindset of the character

In commenting on these exercises, students concluded that “...the process of breaking it down into little pieces was helpful...” and also that “...the talking heads exercise highlighted some of the issues”. Students also felt that “...it helps to understand other people's point of view about their roles”.

All of the exercises used by the teacher and experienced by the students are designed to move the process along at a pace. Although the Investigative Drama unit carries no marks for inclusion in the final course, it is important that students make good use of their time and are encouraged to see how the skills they gain through the process can be applied to other elements of the course which do carry a value in terms of marks.



(B) PARTS FOR THE WHOLE

In this section, the students are working on joining together parts of their investigative experience to make a complete piece of drama.



For the purpose of producing coherently connected investigative dramas, the class has been divided into two main groups with approximately six students in each. The teacher is clear about the challenge: "I work with six directors in each group... The challenge is to ensure that it isn't six individual dramas."



A new piece of drama can only be tested when shown to members of an audience who had no involvement in its creation. Students should be aware of the need to discard parts of the drama which are not effective or expand sections which are clearly in need of development.

The teacher is aware of the need for students to move on in terms of rehearsal time and to consider the use of theatre arts to enhance their presentations.

It is also clear that for evaluative purposes a student should be considering the contribution which s/he has made to the process of investigating and the development of the final drama.





In the process, the teacher reminds his students – and viewers – that “...at Higher level there is a greater expectation of characterisation” and that students should “keep coming back to the links to unify the drama”. In addition, students must consider how to add “layers of theatre arts”.

(C) TECHNICAL MATTERS

Once the early rehearsals have been completed, students’ attention must turn to the technical details of set, lighting, costume and sound, all of which enhance the presentation of drama. Further guidance and insight on technical matters is given from a school perspective in Appendix 2 and, from theatre professionals’ perspective, in chapter 3 of the DVD and of this booklet.

The “Technical Matters” section of the DVD illustrates how teamwork continues to be the hallmark of a successful approach to the dramatic task.

The teacher gives advice on how to convene a technical rehearsal in which all important cues can be identified and rehearsed without having to engage in a complete run-through of all the dialogue.



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- The director must share his/her vision with other members of the technical team.
- The students are asked to understand the advantages of producing a script which can then be used to cue technical actions.
- Students also appreciate the importance of underpinning all this activity through good organisation.



In the specific example featured:

- the director uses the cross-fading of spotlights to help stage alternative perspectives on the gender issue
- there is the use of gels to create atmosphere
- sound is used to give a sense of time and atmosphere





chapter 3...

**TECHNICAL TOOLBOX:
A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH**

...technical toolbox: a professional approach

TECHNICAL TOOLBOX : A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH



Students at Higher and Advanced Higher will need to consider the technical aspects of their production. This could include lighting, sound, costume, setting and props.

While drama facilities in schools may vary in terms of technical equipment, it is hoped that this focus on the work of professionals will offer ideas for simple techniques to be used in the enhancement of Devised Drama and Investigative Drama.

In this chapter, technical staff from TAG and a group of actors work through a scene from “A Taste of Honey”.

In professional theatre, the director works with a production team. However, in the DVD, there is a particular focus on the director’s professional relationship with the lighting designer and how the director’s interpretation of one scene in particular (Act 2 Scene 1) is realised through the use of a relatively simple lighting rig. This focus has been selected in an effort to assist students to understand many of the lighting decisions which they may have to make in the process of developing their own productions.

In analysing Act 2 Scene 1 of “A Taste of Honey”, the director demonstrates that lighting is an ongoing part of the process of rehearsing the play for performance. Technical issues are discussed as actors work through the rehearsal process.

The approach and techniques illustrated may help students at Higher level to consider the technical aspects of texts in preparation for dramatic commentary exercises.



For students at Advanced Higher level there may also be some benefit for the preparation of their practical examination.

More specifically:

- students specialising in Acting will see professional performers work with a director
- those preferring to be Designers should gain an insight into the use of lighting
- students who choose to be Directors will sample the wide range of tasks which a professional director has to consider when working towards a production date



Teachers should also benefit from encountering the professionals' ideas and skills and may wish to use this chapter as a readily available source of professional development which, in turn, may prompt new lessons in theatre arts for both Higher and Advanced Higher courses.

In this section:

- the Director outlines his role and the importance of getting his technical team to work towards the production
- the director of the play consults the lighting designer about the location and the time in which the play is set
- the lighting designer and the director agree on the mood and atmosphere which the audience should experience
- the use of just a few lamps makes it possible to add to the drama and improve the experience for actors and the audience
- lighting decisions have specific connection to the text as in, for example, "I like this romantic half-light. It just goes with this Manchester maisonette."



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The lighting designer shows how to build up an appropriate lighting state for the scene using the following techniques:

- fresnels are used to throw soft edged light
- barn doors are used to shape beams of light
- the striking of the match provides a cue to add more light to the actor's face
- the switching on of the main light in the room provides a cue for the lighting technician to change the lighting state
- a gobo is used to project a window pattern across the set
- the colour of filters, or “gels”, are used effectively to provide atmosphere: the coldness of the moonlight and the warmth of the room's interior



In their discussion, the director and the lighting designer ponder an alternative to using lighting just to give a sense of realism. They consider the use of a less 'natural' colour and a rhombus shape to represent escape from reality.

Paul Sorley, Lighting Designer:

“...because it is so squalid. Just to take them out of that ...for a brief moment.”

Guy Hollands, Artistic Director:

- “The play is called a Taste of Honey after all and I do believe that's because these characters are in search of their taste of honey... moment of happiness...”
- “We should try it and see.”





The Lighting Designer experiments with the concept of 'geometric shapes' explaining how to achieve the effect of creating rhombuses. He also adds other 'special' lamps into the lighting state to create the desired effect. However, the device of "geometric shapes" is rejected for now as it is considered too much for the scene.

- "I think it's going to be too much of a change..."
Guy Hollands, Artistic Director

This is a good example of experimentation with lighting and although not used in the scene, it is noted as a useful effect and may be used later in another scene in the production.

Experimenting with technical enhancement is part of Investigative or Devised Drama. However, students often appear to use lighting for no real associated creative purpose. The methods demonstrated by the lighting designer and discussed with the director show what can be achieved with a relatively simple lighting rig and some experimentation. It is important for students to realise that these possibilities and ultimate decisions are closely related to very clear dramatic purpose.

The completed scene, together with the lighting plot in place can be accessed by users of the DVD. Viewers may wish to evaluate the scene with the following questions in mind:

- How effective is the atmosphere that has been created by the lighting?
- How do the technical effects support the performance?
- How well have time and place been created as the director imagined?



APPENDICES

Included within this pack is a set of teaching materials outlining resources used and processes undergone with Advanced Higher Drama students and Higher Drama students.

The Higher Drama material includes a structured time-line from the introduction of a text to presentation. The time-line should help both teacher and student to keep the process moving and to maximise the time allocated to the Investigative Drama unit.

The appendices incorporate an outline of the learning outcomes for Investigative Drama at Higher level and Devised Drama at Advanced Higher.

Grateful thanks to Derek Brockett, Lockerbie Academy and Frances Paterson, Holy Rood High School, Edinburgh for permission to reproduce their work in the appendices which follow.



appendix 1

**HOLYROOD HIGH SCHOOL: DEvised DRAMA
OUTCOMES**

OUTCOME 1

Devise a dramatic presentation on a chosen theme.

The stipulated themes:

The River	Equinox	Justice
Temptation	Escapism	Renaissance

Performance criteria:

- (a) identifies with justification a theme for dramatic exploration
- (b) selects source materials which are appropriate to the chosen theme
- (c) investigates the use of the source materials in dramatic terms
- (d) uses drama form and structure effectively to devise a dramatic presentation
- (e) explores the use of technology to enhance the presentation

OUTCOME 2

Demonstrate practical skills in the realisation of a dramatic presentation.

Performance criteria:

- (a) communicates a complete, coherent and integrated theatrical statement to the audience
- (b) uses practical skills effectively

OUTCOME 3

Evaluate the dramatic presentation

Performance criteria:

- (a) evaluates the dramatic effectiveness of the presentation in terms of impact on audience and communication of the theatrical statement
- (b) evaluates own use of practical skills in the presentation



devised drama

**A POSSIBLE SEQUENCE
FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING**

...appendix 1

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

Discussion on the themes for devised drama and brainstorming ideas for each of the themes in groups.

IDENTIFICATION OF SOME SOURCE MATERIALS AND EXPLORATION OF THEIR DRAMATIC POTENTIAL

The creative responses of the students, some of which are seen on the DVD, were stimulated by a wide range of resources. It is also helpful to expose students to input from more than one teacher. All of this combines to aid purposeful learning.

The following were used as a springboard for initial group-forming activities:

- The play, “Billy Liar” – escapism
- Joanne Harris’s book “Chocolat” – the river
- Rosetti’s picture of the dying Ophelia – the river
- A newspaper article on the disappearance of a young girl – justice
- The transcript of a drugs case – justice
- The play “In Camera” by Jean-Paul Sartre – temptation
- A picture of “Mayes Howe” in Orkney – equinox

After brainstorming ideas and examining source materials in more detail, students were encouraged to produce group improvisations

USE OF WORKSHOP TO HELP FURTHER EXPLORE THE CREATIVE PROCESS

A workshop was undertaken linked to a piece of theatre the students had experienced in the Edinburgh Festival called “The Wonderful World of Dissocia”.

DEVISING OWN PIECE OF THEATRE

Produce an original piece of theatre that can stand on its own lasting between five and thirty minutes. This involves:

- Creating a piece of theatre using at least three source materials
- Experimentation and improvisation
- Briefing the actors
- Explaining the plot, style and genre of the piece
- Discussing the subtext, the characters and the dramatic intention
- Preparing a script

REHEARSAL

This involves directing the piece of theatre and taking on board:

- Time management
- Actors' reaction to the piece
- Shaping, structuring and use of theatrical devices
- Its progression from page to stage
- Staging
- Design factors
- Use of theatre arts

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PERFORMANCE

- Judging the end result
- Assessing the reaction of the audience

EVALUATION

- Did it go as expected?
- What changed?



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**POSSIBLE LINKS
TO A CHOSEN PRACTITIONER**

...appendix 1

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One of the practitioners who can be studied is Stanislavski. Devised Drama is an obvious way to introduce students to a practical exploration of his system. This is not an academic study but a natural, logical way to approach a text practically and give directorial ideas to a student who may be having difficulty finding a way forward.

WHY USE STANISLAVSKI?

The use of Stanislavski helps students create credible characters and offers helpful rehearsal techniques.

THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES

The following are the factors which an actor cannot alter:

- The storyline of the play
- When it is set
- Events in the plot
- Conditions of life
- The director's interpretation
- Period
- Time

The 'given circumstances' underline the importance of research for the actor and helps him/her understand the world in which the character lives. Whatever happens must have a purpose, must be sincere, must have credibility.

THE MAGIC “IF”

“The aim of the actor is to use technique to turn the play into a theatrical reality. In this process, imagination plays by far the greatest part.”

- If I were in this situation, what would I do?
- What is the life of the character like offstage?

GOOD OBSERVATION

- Look at the people you meet and fill in the gaps. For example, what could cause the coldness between a couple?
- Concentration
- Circles of attention:
 - The outer level of focus – people and objects on stage, never the audience. Observing an object in real detail.
 - The inner focus – thinking only in terms of the character with no personal intrusion.

PHYSICALITY

Adopting the physical actions and ways in which the character will walk, their gestures and mannerisms.

UNITS AND OBJECTIVES

Dividing the text into small units which contain independent action.

- For example, the way a character enters a room. What is the character’s objective for entering the room? To start an argument with someone? To give them dreadful news? To give them good news?

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THE SUPER-OBJECTIVE

What is the character's objective for the whole play? What is the character trying to achieve in the play?

THE THROUGH LINE

Ensuring that all the units lead towards the super-objective.



devised drama

**SQA EVALUATION ADVICE
TO THE CANDIDATE**

...appendix 1

The Scottish Qualifications Authority* offers the following guidelines.

You have to show you are able to evaluate the drama presentation.
The evaluation consists of two parts:

- (i) Evaluates the effectiveness of the drama process.
 - State your choice of theme
 - List the sources you used and assess their usefulness
 - Comment on the effectiveness of your choice of form and structure
 - Comment on the areas which had to be reworked and why
 - How effective was your casting?
 - If tensions were experienced, how were they resolved?
 - Issues of staging and design
 - Technical and media issues

- (ii) Evaluates the effectiveness of the presentation.
 - Describe the impact the presentation had on your audience
 - Comment on the effectiveness of the theatrical statement
 - Comment on the effectiveness of your choice of staging, design, media and technical issues
 - Comment on your own use of practical skills

*Scottish Qualifications Authority
National Assessment Bank / D199 13/001
Advanced Higher Drama: Devised Drama



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STUDENT EVALUATION

...appendix 1

The director of the main featured devised drama in the DVD has written the following evaluation with reference to the structure required by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

(i)

My choices of theme were justice and escapism, as these both were thought-provoking and offered most possibilities to me for an interesting plot-progression and visual ideas.

I used a variety of sources for inspiration for my play. Firstly, we took part in a workshop relating to the play called “The Wonderful World of Dissocia” by Anthony Nielson. This workshop explained the inner world people would create for themselves and was useful as it offered different ways of looking at themes as well as helping consider the idea of escaping into your own world. We then went to see the play, and certain parts of the visuals were very interesting. In the fantasy scenes, the use of strobe lighting created a distorted and disturbed feel. In the second half, the cold, white, clinical feel of the hospital had a paranoid tone and edge which I thought I could utilise. However, most of the really fantastical bits were not useful as, by this point, I realised I didn’t want to create anything too surreal. In “Dissocia” it was the ‘real’ section which had the most impact on me.

I also watched the film “The Truman Show” about a man whose life is a television show and he doesn’t realise it. The sense of paranoia and the feeling of being trapped as the audience goes along with the tide was more interesting to me than the plot itself.

I then read a couple of plays: “Brothers of Thunder” by Anne Marie Di Mambro and “Billy Liar” by Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall. “Brothers of Thunder” didn’t prove particularly useful as its sense of escapism was about opting out of the world. However, “Billy Liar” proved useful because of the concept of escaping into a world of lies. This helped me in the formation of an idea for my production.

We had a playwriting workshop which focused on dialogue. This was useful as it gave me ideas for the form and structure of the play, as well as stressing

the importance of appropriate dialogue between the characters and the difference between the formal speech of the doctor and the more natural speech of the girl.

Another important influence on structure was reading “No Exit” by Jean-Paul Sartre. The tension caused by the play being set in one room - keeping the unities of time and place - was remarkable, so I decided to use a similar time-span in my own play.

Lastly, a TV show and a newspaper article were both useful sources. The TV programme showed how people form their perceptions of others based on clothes, hair and general appearance. This affected the appearance I wanted to create for my lead character. The newspaper article was about an old murder case at “The World’s End” pub on the Royal Mile which was useful in developing a plot line.

I chose play-form to communicate my message as it offered the direct approach necessary for the audience to interact with the production. The audience must be taken along with the lead character of Lucy, played by Kirsty, and the realism of play-form was best to gain their sympathy and draw them in.

In terms of structure, I kept the unities of time and place to create a feeling of being trapped and to emphasise the tension of the situation. I think this came across effectively as the lead character begins and ends in the same spot, creating an impression of the fourth wall being removed so members of the audience feel as if they are peering into her prison cell.

Another structure I used was freeze-frame to highlight the moment when the eye-witness account was produced. Dialogue was used throughout between the two main characters. I tried to create the effect of the doctor being the voice of the audience in order to foster a sense of audience involvement. Monologue was also a vital part as I used it to connect the lead character to the audience as well as creating the paradox of revealing the character’s mind to us when, in fact, it showed us the lie.

The plot concerned a young girl, Lucy, being interviewed by a doctor: Dr Rebecca Stevens, played by Emma. It is clear that Lucy is hurt and being interviewed in what could be a hospital room or cell of some kind. As Dr Stevens questions her, it seems as though Lucy was violently raped until a final revelation shows that the audience has been duped all along and it is Lucy herself who is a murderer.

Certain parts of the dialogue had to be reworked, as it was sometimes not ambiguous enough, such as when Dr Stevens questions Lucy for the last time. Dr Stevens at first didn't react - which seems too unrealistic - so I reworked it so that she had a more ambiguous reaction which didn't give away her knowledge of the true ending. This was a key moment in the play where I couldn't lie to the audience but I didn't want to give the plot away either, so the delivery of this was reworked until the lines' importance and ambiguous nature was finalised.

Another part which had to be reworked was the blocking of Kirsty's monologues. At first she moved all over the stage, but this had to be avoided when media were projected onto the cyclorama. As a result, we worked it so that she became more stationary, but still presented the monologue effectively through gestures and little, tight, tense movements.

More reworking had to be done in the part where Dr Stevens announced she had the statement of a witness. There was not enough impact when this was first performed so I introduced a freeze-frame and a brief change of lights - from harsh, white lighting to a brief, dark red wash and back again to emphasise its significance.

One of the biggest changes I made was the shouting sequence. Originally it was very stationary but it did not have enough impact so it was changed again as it was not considered an exciting enough introduction. I changed it to Lucy rocking in the middle of a red, washed stage and Dr Stevens entering through the audience, with a white light going up and Lucy screaming. This conveyed Lucy's instability from the start and helped establish Dr Stevens's relationship with the audience.

Casting was one of the most effective parts of my production. I was very lucky to choose two people who worked hard, remembered their lines and moves and turned up to rehearsals. There were never any problems with absence and I was able to keep to a strict schedule thanks to my two responsible actors.

If there were any tensions, they were caused round my media. I had a substantial piece of film showing uproar at night to play over the monologues. However, my media operator had difficulty learning cues. At one point, I thought disaster had struck when it looked as though all my media had been deleted, but fortunately he had back-up and it was put into a different format.

With regard to staging, I had a very sparse, simple, clinical set to give a kind of inhumane feeling to the production. At first this included a mirror but it proved difficult in terms of positioning and the reflection of the mirror proved very distracting. I used rostra, isolated in the centre of the stage, to emphasise the isolation of Lucy. I had one chair at the side to show Dr Stevens's role as one disconnected from Lucy. I also had an entrance through the audience by Dr Stevens to emphasise that she came from the audience.

Costume added to the overall effect of realism and helped convey the professional nature of the character. Lucy had very casual clothing emphasising her age and background to some extent. She wore a skimpy 'Next' top with pink and black stripes which somehow pointed up her vulnerability.

In terms of lighting, I used a very basic red wash at the start to represent the blood and violence that had come before. The main lighting throughout was simple with a stark, white central spotlight which created shadows and dark spaces, creating an eerie, mysterious feel on stage. I used the same lighting at the end of the play as I did at the beginning, fading from white light to red and then to blackout to create a kind of symmetry, showing that events happened before the play and would happen beyond it.

I prepared a clear lighting cue sheet and had several technical rehearsals so my lighting was all on cue and correct on the day.

I also used media during Kirsty's monologues to create the flashbacks. It was difficult getting the necessary resources to film, but eventually I borrowed the school camcorder and filmed George Street at night. Using the editing suite was fairly easy as I had prior experience of it and I cut the footage into three parts, each becoming less blurry to show Lucy "remembering the incident". There were some rehearsal issues in relation to the film and getting precise cues, as well as trying to sort the format of the film. However, these were eventually resolved with the technician.

(ii)

My presentation had a fairly shocking impact on the audience. It was not a particularly celebratory play. One person said it was 'well done, but depressing'. Another said it was 'well written'! Judging by people's facial expressions in the audience, they clearly reacted strongly to the play as their sense of outrage was heightened since the character they had trusted turned out to be a liar. There were a few solemn faces at the end and people gasped at the dramatic denouement.

I think my theatrical statement was effectively conveyed. I was trying to make a point about the façade people create by the way they look and dress. People naturally feel empathy with Lucy as they assume that men would be violent while Lucy appears to be a young, apparently vulnerable, blonde girl. However, in the end, it turns out to be the opposite. People seemed shocked that Lucy could do such a thing and this reaction from the audience showed how effective it was.

My staging was effective as it was stark and simple, bringing the audience in to focus specifically on Lucy. The clinical, eerie atmosphere came across well in performance, conveying Lucy's isolation. The realisation that the cold, creepy set was not designed to show how scared Lucy was but instead was to show how frightening she was had quite an impact. Lucy's entrance from the audience worked particularly well on the night as it drew people's attention and kept the audience on their toes as they did not know what was going to happen next.

In the performance, the media was not cued on time, but many people in the audience commented on how effective it was and how the film added to the confusion in the girl's mind, creating an artistic impression of the flashbacks and adding to the aesthetic impact of the play.

My lighting was clearly effective as it highlighted key moments in the play, cementing its importance as the audience gasped and looked back to the play.

In terms of my own practical skills of direction, the audience reacted to my characters as I intended. I could see and hear the shocked reactions from where I stood at the lighting box. I was very pleased that the characterisations worked as well as they did. I felt my characters entirely believable and, without sounding big-headed, I really thought "this worked!". It was an exhilarating feeling and has spurred me on to want to direct more in the future.

...Investigating **DRAMA**



appendix 2

**LOCKERBIE ACADEMY: INVESTIGATIVE DRAMA
GENERAL ADVICE AND OUTCOMES**

...Investigating **DRAMA**

These notes are to help you understand what you are being assessed on and how you are being assessed. These terms will be used:

- **Outcomes** – these statements describe what you should be able to do by the end of the unit
- **Performance criteria** – these statements describe clearly and in detail what you should be able to do and the standard, which you have to reach. You must demonstrate achievement of all the performance criteria to pass the unit
- **Instrument of assessment** – this is the means by which the evidence is gathered to show that you have met the standards of the performance criteria.

In this unit you will be devising and performing a presentation on a chosen issue, topic or theme. The instrument of assessment is a written evaluation which you will complete after your group's final presentation.

Outcome 1:

Take responsibility for an identifiable section of the presentation.

PCs

- a Selects ideas for form and content with justification in terms of potential dramatic impact.
- b Uses drama form and structure appropriate to the interpretation of the section.
- c Selects design and technical concepts appropriate to the interpretation of the section.
- d Prepares effectively for each rehearsal of own identified section.
- e Evaluates the effectiveness of each rehearsal of own section

Outcome 2:**Contribute to presentation process and final presentation.****PCs**

- a States ideas and opinions within group discussion, which are relevant and useful to planning, organisation and ongoing evaluation of the presentation process.
- b Directs own section effectively in terms of communicating clearly with the actors and developing suitable stage positions/moves, delivery of lines and characterisation.
- c Participates positively in the other sections in terms of taking direction and experimenting with dramatic ideas.
- d Portrays acting role(s) convincingly.

Outcome 3:**Evaluate the effectiveness of the final presentation.****PCs**

- a Comments with justification on the impact of the performance on the audience.
- b Evaluate the effectiveness in performance of the group's overall choice of drama form (s), structure, staging, design and use of technical effects.
- c Evaluates own contribution to performance in terms of acting role(s) and directorial section.
- d Evaluate the contribution of others to the performance in terms of acting and the implementation of technical skills.

...Investigating **DRAMA**



investigative drama

INSTRUMENT OF ASSESSMENT FOR THE UNIT

Task:

You have to write an essay that evaluates the effectiveness of the rehearsal process and final presentation of your group's investigative drama.

Structure:

Your response should be completed to address the following points:

THE DRAMA PROCESS

mark

- State the chosen theme, issue or message of the group. 1
- Explain how your directorial section fitted in with the group presentation. 3
- Describe and justify the form and structure used in your directorial section. 4
- Describe the rehearsal process of your own section, justifying directorial decisions taken. You should consider the development of ideas and characters, the use of space/setting, the interaction of the group and the effectiveness of theatre arts used. Refer to your initial ideas, including sources used, eg poems, photographs, texts, sound. Reflect on the process, highlighting any problems or issues encountered, solutions found and changes made. 12

THE FINAL PRESENTATION

- *Evaluate the group's final presentation. You should consider the impact on the audience and the effectiveness of the contribution of both yourself and others in the performance. In addition, comment on the effectiveness of your directorial section.* 10

Resources: *Your diary of the rehearsal process.
Feedback from your audience.
A video recording of the final performance.*

Time: *You will be given one hour to complete your essay. (It is likely that the evaluation will be completed over two different drama sessions). You must sit this assessment under exam conditions. You will not have access to your notes when you sit the assessment.*

NB The threshold for a pass is 15 marks, which must include at least 6 marks for the fourth bullet point and 5 marks for the last bullet point.

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investigative drama

DEVELOPING OUR CHOSEN THEME

...appendix 2

'Gender Issues Past & Present'

OUR TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for this year's 'Investigative Drama' presentations is Standard Grade Drama candidates, Advanced Higher Drama candidates, family and friends.

STAGING & DESIGN CONSTRAINTS

Every theatrical production has a budget. You must use existing Drama departmental resources. These should be familiar to you. Negotiate with the rest of your group and agree on the acting space/audience configuration:

- End on
- Thrust
- Avenue/Traverse
- Arena/In-The-Round
- Promenade
- Proscenium Arch

It is essential that you have slick costume/scene changes. Even at this early stage try to agree on design concepts that will help to keep the group presentation flowing. For example, everyone is dressed in a neutral colour. When you take on a particular role, you can add an item of clothing such as a jacket or a hat. Alternatively, you could suggest certain characteristics by use of props. (If it was good enough for Shakespeare...) Remember the audience will get impatient if you have long pauses for scene/costume changes. You do not want your final presentation to become a fragmented experience which confuses your audience.

INITIAL DRAMA STIMULUS

You will be given an extract from a contemporary Scottish play. You are asked to use the extract as a stimulus for your directorial section. In the first instance you should try to gain a full understanding of the extract and make thorough preparations prior to your first rehearsal. Try to work out which 'Gender Issue(s)' are being examined in the extract.

The gender issue(s) explored in my drama extract is/are:

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investigative drama

REHEARSALS

...appendix 2

PREPARATION PRIOR TO THE FIRST REHEARSAL

- *Read the extract several times.*
- *What is the setting of the play?*
- *What is the period of the play?*
- *Consider the passage of time within the extract.*
- *What is the genre of the play that the extract comes from? Is it obvious?*
- *What are the structural devices used by the playwright in the extract?*
- *Identify the 'Gender Issue(s)' being explored.*
- *Write a brief scenario for the extract. (Who, where, what, why and when.)*
- *Compile a role card for each character:*
 - **Name**
 - **Age**
 - **Physical description**
 - **Relevant background information**
 - **Personality**
 - **Role within the extract**
- *Identify the relationship between each of the characters in the extract.*
- *What are your initial observations re the subtext.*
- *Consider how the playwright has created dramatic tension.*
- *Consider possible ideas for staging the extract.*
- *Compile 'blocking moves' for the extract.*

HANDY ADVICE / TECHNIQUES / DRAMA DEVICES TO HELP YOU GET YOUR ACTORS MOTIVATED

These are just a few techniques/devices. Your drama teacher has lots more if you need further inspiration.

- ***Don't let actors sit for lengthy periods, they tend to get lazy and become reluctant to put energy into a scene if they sit for too long.***
- ***Movement warm-ups to energise actors.***
- ***Voice warm-ups to help the actors look after their voices and to extend their vocal range.***
- ***Spontaneous improvisations can free actors from the text.***
- ***Rehearsed improvisations can encourage the actor to consolidate a scene as well as add new possibilities.***
- ***Visualisation exercises can help the actor to gain a particular spatial awareness or feel a particular mood.***
- ***Mimed activities can help build believability and give focus.***
- ***Photographs can help to give ideas re personality, costume, characteristics etcetera.***
- ***A freeze frame can be used to establish key moments and the start and the end of a scene.***
- ***Hot-seating is a very useful technique to help the actor develop aspects of characterisation.***
- ***Thought-tracking/thought tunnel inject pace or help the actor to reflect in role.***
- ***Get your actors to swap roles on a regular basis (role-reversal) as this allows everyone to demonstrate different aspects to a character's make-up/personality/motivation etcetera. This technique also means that you can still rehearse if an actor is absent.***

- **Forum-Theatre techniques** gives the whole group ownership of the drama.
- **Games** can be very useful, eg they can help increase energy levels.
- **Defining space** helps actors to get a feel for a situation. Gives focus and helps with concentration.
- **Forum theatre** gives everyone the opportunity to be a collaborator.
- **Narration** can help to establish facts quickly.
- **Reportage** is a useful technique to add dramatic tension or sum up important facts/details.
- **Interviews** are useful as they give formality to a scene and help to establish focus.
- **Overheard conversations** can help to give an element of surprise. They are also useful in giving additional fuel to build up dramatic tension. They can also give different insights to a given character/situation.
- **Mantle of the expert** is a useful technique as the director can give information and explore 'in-role'.
- **Giving witness** can inject excitement or emotion into a scene. Can also help get actors to reflect/summarise the key events in a scene.
- A **movement sequence** can be a good way of looking at the physical action of a scene. This technique can help to cut down the noise level and changes the mood of a rehearsal. You are able to concentrate on movement aspects such as positioning, facial expressions, body language and gestures.
- **Chorus work** can help to give unity to a piece. Involves everyone. Can be a useful dramatic effect in its own right.
- **Letters/diary entries/fax messages** can help with reflection or help to give new information in a drama context.
- **Telephone conversation/s** can be used to focus on voice or increase suspense as the others try to fill in the missing half of the conversation.

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

REHEARSAL ONE

Exemplar Template. Be prepared!

1. Start with a warm up that is linked to the textual extract or the 'Gender Issue(s)' being explored.

This could be a game, a specific drama exercise, a short piece of writing that is read aloud, a spontaneous improvisation etcetera.

2. Present your ideas to the group.
3. Issue copies of the play extract.
4. Get your actors to start reading the textual extract.
5. Experiment with textual extract.
6. Issue role cards and a scenario sheet.
7. Define the acting space.
8. Block the textual extract.
9. Motivate the actors throughout the rehearsal. If concentration levels or energy levels drop then it is up to you to do something about it.
10. Be a good listener. Encourage your actors to be collaborators. Remember people don't like dictators.

ONGOING EVALUATION

Evaluate each one of your rehearsals. Discuss your progress with the actors and the teacher. Jot down your own thoughts. Did the rehearsals go well? How do you know? What evidence do you have?

How is your section developing?

What new ideas do you have in light of the rehearsal and the group's feedback?

How do you see the characters developing? Are the actors coming up with convincing characterisations?

What problems have you encountered? How have you solved each problem?

Are your actors working well as a group?

How well are you coping as a director? Are your actors listening to you?

Are you making full use of the performance space?

Are you making good use of theatre arts?

PREPARATION PRIOR TO THE SECOND AND THIRD REHEARSAL

Now start to give some thought to the direction you want your directorial section to take. Develop ideas for either a continuation of the scene that you have been given or start to investigate events that happened prior to the moment/s depicted in the extract. Alternatively, you could come up with a contrasting scene that is unrelated to the extract but helps to show how things might have changed or should/could change re 'Gender Issues Past & Present'. You might wish to show a scene involving some of the characters twenty, thirty or forty years into the future. You might want to show a scene involving characters that we hear about but don't see. Use your imagination. The important thing is to jot down ideas and get experimenting. Don't leave this vital planning to others on the day of your next rehearsal. **If you get stuck ask for help before your next rehearsal.**

REHEARSAL TWO AND THREE

1. Run through the scene that you blocked in your last rehearsal, consolidating the blocking moves. (Remember to use theatrical terminology.)
2. What is the direction that you would like to see your directorial section take?
3. Discuss the ideas that other directors might have for their directorial sections.
4. How will each directorial section be linked to the overall group presentation?
5. Can you think of natural links?
6. Start experimenting with your own ideas and point out the links to the initial textual extract. (Alternatively you could write your own scene(s) and get the actors to do further blocking rehearsals.)
7. Introduce new stimuli/ideas.

...Investigating **DRAMA**

8. Issue additional role cards, if required.
9. Issue additional scenario sheets, if required.
10. Experiment!
11. What is the tempo of your rehearsal? Is everyone involved? If your drama doesn't involve everyone, use innovative approaches to ensure that your actors don't sit down, unoccupied, for lengthy periods.
12. Keep motivating your actors. Give them lots of positive reinforcement. Keep them interested in your ideas.
13. Don't forget the element of surprise. A useful technique to get the creativity buzz!

**PREPARATION PRIOR TO THE
FOURTH AND FIFTH REHEARSAL**

How does your directorial section fit in with the whole group drama presentation 'Gender Issues In Scotland (Past, Present, Future...)'?

What is the **message** of your directorial section?

Do you now wish to use an additional contrasting **drama form** in your directorial section? If so, why? If not, why not?

How will you use the evaluative comments at the end of the last rehearsal so that you are well prepared for this rehearsal?

What is the overall **structure** of your directorial section going to be?

What drama **conventions** are you using in your section?

- slow motion
- tableaux
- soliloquy
- flashback
- flash forward
- narration
- voice over
- monologue
- dialogue

Why are you using these conventions?

Do you need to offer further drama stimuli to get new responses/ideas?

Are you happy with the content of your directorial section?

REHEARSAL FOUR AND FIVE

1. Continue to block/consolidate/improvise each scene.
2. Continue to experiment with the content of your directorial section.
3. Spend time on getting your actors to deepen each characterisation. (Consider using techniques such as: hot-seating, role-on-the-wall, soliloquies, monologues, role-reversal etcetera.)
4. Get the actors to further develop each of the relationships presented.
5. How much of your directorial section is your own? Remember the initial textual excerpt given to you to help you get you started.
6. Make sure that all members of your 'Investigative Drama' group have agreed on the running order for the whole drama presentation.

PREPARATION PRIOR TO THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH REHEARSAL

Now you must think about firming up some of your ideas. What will the final content of your directorial section be?

Start thinking about how theatre arts will enhance your directorial section. (Jot down your ideas and consult with your technical team.)

Source your props and costumes. Use mock props in rehearsals.

What scenery do you require? What furniture do you require?

What are the weakest areas? What action do you need to take to sort these problems out?

REHEARSAL SIX AND SEVEN

1. Get your cast to further develop credible characterisations. Are you happy with their interpretation/portrayal of each character?
2. Consider doing further detailed characterisation exercises.
3. You may also wish to focus in on aspects of vocal delivery or aspects of movement.

Voice

language
register
pitch
pace
accent
dialect
volume
clarity
pause
emphasis

Movement

body language
facial expression
gestures
using space
actor-audience relationship
mimed activities
still pictures

4. Start to run through your whole directorial section without stopping.
5. Do all cast members present convincing relationships?
6. Is everyone making good use of the acting space?
7. Does your directorial section have dramatic impact? How do you know?
8. How are the sightlines? Check out all the different areas where the audience will be seated.
9. Keep motivating your team. Give them positive feedback. Have you listened to your team's evaluative comments?
10. Have you worked out the links between each of the directorial sections?

PREPARATION PRIOR TO THE EIGHTH REHEARSAL

What are the weakest areas of your directorial section? What action do you need to take to sort these problems out?

Acquire (or get your team to acquire) all scenery, furniture, props and costumes.

Compile:

- costume plot
- props list
- furniture list
- ground plan/s
- setting plot/s
- sound cue sheets
- lighting cue sheets

Liaise with your technical team and ensure that everyone in the team knows your requirements.

Be specific re your requirements. This will require very careful planning and good negotiating skills.

Ensure that each member of the technical team has copies of your cue sheets prior to your next rehearsal.

REHEARSAL EIGHT

1. Run through the whole of your directorial section without stopping.
2. Give your actors feedback. What do they need to work on most?
3. Are you happy with the way that your directorial section fits into the whole class 'Investigative Drama'?
4. Take time to work on the links between your directorial section and the other parts of the group 'Investigative Drama'.
5. Ensure that your technical team are following your run through and get some kind of awareness re when you require props to be set and cues to be executed.

PREPARATION PRIOR TO THE TECHNICAL REHEARSAL & THE DRESS REHEARSAL

Work with your technical team. Make sure that everyone knows your requirements

Make sure that everyone knows your targets for the technical rehearsal and the dress rehearsal.

Re-enforce the running order of the whole 'Investigative Drama'.

Compile your programme.

Compile an audience questionnaire.

TECHNICAL REHEARSAL

1. 'Top and tail'. Go through each and every lighting and sound cue for each directorial section.
2. Make sure the technical team is aware of all the correct cue lines.
3. Rehearse difficult/problematic sequences until everyone is clear what to do.
4. Go through setting plots, props changes, costume changes etcetera.
5. Now start to run the whole 'Investigative Drama' and include the links between the different directorial sections.
6. Evaluate the run through.
7. Give notes to the actors and the technical crew.

DRESS REHEARSAL

1. Run through the entire 'Investigative Drama'.
2. Everyone should be wearing full costume.
3. All props should be used.
4. Every one in the technical team should give the agreed effects/cues on time.
5. Time the performance.
6. Give the cast and crew evaluative comments at the end of the dress rehearsal.
7. Break a leg!

TOP TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL EVALUATION

- Throughout the rehearsal period keep a diary.
- Keep a note of your targets for each rehearsal.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of each rehearsal.
- Once you have performed your 'Investigative Drama' you will be given an opportunity to watch a video of it. Once you have watched the video, write down evaluative notes.
- Read the responses on the audience questionnaire forms.

ISSUES OF GENDER

CHECKLISTS FOR ANALYSIS

The role of men & women

- The role of men within the context and period of a play
- The role of men within society
- Status of men
- The role of women within the context and period of a play
- The role of women within society
- Men in the workplace
- Women in the workplace
- Expectations, hopes and aspirations
- Shifts in status
- Stereotypes
- Why stereotypes are used
- Motivation
- Theme/s
- Intentions of the playwright
- Character background
- Character development
- Impact on audience

The generation gap

- An older person's outlook compared to a younger person's outlook
- Status
- A young woman's/man's role within society compared to an older woman/man and vice versa
- Women's/men's role within the drama itself
- Motivation
- Expectations, hopes and aspirations
- Plot
- Theme/s
- Relationships
- Intentions of the playwright
- Social/historical context of the play
- Character background
- Character development
- Stereotypes

Parenthood

- The role of parents within the context/period of a play
- The role of children within the context/period of a play
- Expectations, hopes and aspirations
- Comparisons between parents and children today
- Status
- Gender
- Motivation
- Theme/s
- Intentions of the playwright
- Character background
- Character development