



Rednock School
Quality, Partnership, Success

Transition Materials

BTEC Level 3

Performing Arts

Name:

Introduction

Welcome to BTEC Level 3 Performing Arts and well done for choosing Drama! Performing Arts is a challenging BTEC which involves lots of contextual content, research and so you will need to take some time to read and prepare.

In this pack you will find plenty of materials to prepare you for studying **Unit 2: Developing Skills and Techniques for Live Performance**. These tasks will focus on **Learning aim A: Understand the role and skills of a performer**. The work that you do from this pack WILL count towards your course!

A Levels are tricky qualifications to achieve and you need to ensure that you are fully prepared for them. The more work you do now, the easier you will find it when you start your course. Key things to do before starting the course:

- Get yourself a folder and dividers - there is a lot to learn so it is best to be organised from the very start.
- Ensure that you know what exam board you are studying for.
- Read this booklet carefully and work through the activities as instructed by your teacher. This will give you the foundation knowledge needed to start your course.

Grading criteria

Pass A.P1	Merit A.M1	Distinction A.D1
Explain key features of the role and skills of a performer through exploration	Analyse key features of the role and skills of a performer through effective exploration, comparing examples of working practices	Evaluate the key features of the role and skills of a performer through effective exploration, comparing and contrasting examples of working practices to support findings

Professional Actor: Initial research

Using research (and the **Harvard system**), collate some initial research into the **role of an actor**. Hand this research (which must be highlighted and annotated) to me or save it, with this booklet, on our Google Classroom.

Using the research you have found, answer the following questions in your own words. Remember, underneath every question, you must use the **Harvard system** to reference your findings. There is more out there than the internet. You **MUST** use books, DVDS, magazines etc. It can include images, written word, mind maps, graphs etc. (anything!)

Good research will consist of: **Who, What, Where, Why and When!**

Primary research is new **research**, carried out to answer specific issues or questions. It can involve questionnaires, surveys or interviews with individuals or small groups. **Secondary research** makes use of information previously researched for other purposes and publicly available.

TASK 1 - The role of an actor

What are the key skills, qualities and attributes of a professional actor; explain in detail what these roles are and why they are key?

- Skills
- Qualities
- Attributes

What (and why) are the key features of the role of a professional actor? Explain and evaluate the following acting performance roles (what is the role, what are their responsibilities, how does each differ from the other, pay, hours, who has the most difficult/easiest job and why, etc): Lead role, Supporting role, Stand by and Understudy. Can you add any more?

What is a typical working day for a professional actor?

Below is a list of application procedures that you could consider to become a professional actor. Next to each one, describe how and why they would 'sell you'. Compare your list, which is best and why; evaluate.

CVs

- personal statements
- application forms
- auditions
- portfolios of work
- casting agencies
- Head shots

Can you add any more?

A Performer's Life

Actors have many responsibilities when working on a production. Some are specific to a particular type of role and some are common to all performance roles. For example, all performers attend rehearsals at some time during the production process.

Complete the table below to show the responsibilities of each performance role.

Responsibility	Actor	Dancer	Professional actor	Musician
Auditioning				
Attending band calls				
Undertaking character development work				
Attending rehearsals	X		X	X
Taking part in performances				
Attending costume fittings				
Responding to direction				
Learning choreography				
Learning lines and moves				

Responding to musical direction			
Learning song lyrics			

Interrelationships

List any other roles that the professional actor has an interrelationship with. Next to the role, describe the relationship, explaining how they interrelate and why it is important to the success of the performance. Consider what might happen if interrelationship was not effective? The first two have been listed for you.

1. Director

2. Producer

How to become a professional actor?

What formal qualifications do you need to become a professional actor? e.g. university degrees, HND (Higher National Diploma), NVQ (National Vocational Qualification);

Now compare and evaluate these qualifications (which one is the best and why? Are some routes more suitable for some roles and other routes for other roles?)

What training route would you need to take to become a professional actor? There may be more than one!

Now compare and evaluate these training routes (which one is the best route and why? Are some routes more suitable for some roles and other routes for other roles?)

What are the progression routes to become a professional actor, and how do you work up the career ladder (NB: there may be more than one!)

What employment opportunities are out there for professional actors? What are the working conditions for a professional actor?

What educational organisations are out there for professional actors? Where are the best places to study and why (ensure you reference) For example, drama schools, dance conservatoires and universities

1. Access the UCAS website to search for three universities or performing arts schools that you might wish to progress on to after completing your Level 3 course.
2. Look at what training requirements are needed to get on to these three courses.
3. Write an explanation below of the most appropriate and comprehensive range of training requirements that you might need to follow to complete your career path in the performing arts.

Why is professional development important for ANY performer? What strategies could you put in place to ensure your professional development of a professional actor?

What exercises and techniques could you use to develop and improve your performance skills in the following areas?

- Vocal
- Movement
- Character development
- Interpretive

As a professional actor, what methods could you use to ensure you are monitoring your progress? What personal qualities does a professional actor need to succeed in the profession?

Lifestyle

What lifestyle factors would a professional actor have to consider and why? Make a list of each factor and next to each one, describe and explain the reasons for the considerations.

Performance skills; explain, analyse and evaluate your answers.

What technical performance skills does a professional actor need? What physical performance skills does a professional actor need? What vocal performance skills does a professional actor need? What interpretive performance skills does a professional actor need? As a professional actor, how would you make yourself stand out so that you are employable?

Practical skills

What planning would a professional actor have to consider to ensure they are fully ready for the show they are preparing for? How would a professional actor ensure they are ready for a day of rehearsals? How would a professional actor ensure they are ready for a performance? What skills does a professional actor need to ensure they are responding to direction positively to ensure they are achieving their best? How would a professional actor use their team working skills in their job role?

TASK 2 - Case study

Think of a professional actor you admire. Conduct a case study on this performer which includes the following things:

- **Biographical research**
- **Interviews**
- **Their lifestyle**
- **Their role**
- **Their working conditions**
- **Job route**
- **Special skills**

Task 3: RESPONSE TO LIVE PERFORMANCE

Please review Frantic Assembly's "Love Song" on Digital Theatre Plus

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com>

Username: rednockschool - Password: money@2438

1. What did you see?
2. Who directed it?
3. Who performed it?
4. How was it staged? Draw if you have to?
5. How did it make you feel?
6. How did it help you understand the characters?
7. What is the purpose of the play?
8. What was the mood and atmosphere and how did they achieve this?
9. What props did they use? How were they effective?
10. What scenery did they use? How and Why?
11. Which elements of the show were most successful and how you might incorporate these elements into your performance.

Here is an example of Theatre Review

In June 2017 I visited Bristol Hippodrome to watch the National Theatre's performance of **The**

Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night- Time. It was exquisite and the choreography composed by Frantic Assembly was extraordinary- helping to realistically portray the life of Christopher Boone- the character the play follows.

The play had elements of physical theatre contrasting with moments of naturalism/realism throughout. As a result of having choreography composed by Frantic Assembly, it is hardly surprising that their physically demanding, high intensity style shone through in the work of the National Theatre actors. An example of the sense of physicality is the lifts that were carried out to portray scenes and the feelings and emotions of the characters; when Christopher's mother, for example, was said to be swimming in the sea, she got raised up and sent backwards in a loop - mimicking the motion of diving backwards into the water and immersing again in a different spot- feeling refreshed and full of life due to the cold water having engulfed her body. It is when Christopher, among other moments in the play, is staring mesmerized by the downpour of rain outside, that the audience are drawn back to reality and are reminded of Christopher's incredible personality and engagement in everything around him. This part of the play is extremely realistic/naturalistic as Christopher is genuinely fascinated by the rain and his facial expressions and body language really homed in on this- he just stood solid, still and stationary looking in awe out towards the audience, nothing could have distracted him- his full attention was with the weather.

The ensemble work featured in the play was also cleverly choreographed by Frantic Assembly and the movement sequences as a group on the train station helped the audience to understand what life was like inside Christopher's mind- the loud, fast movements represented how frantic he felt as a result of being in a crowded, unfamiliar place with no-one there to help guide him. So these sequences, although having an un-naturalistic appearance, were in fact a realistic way of opening the audience's eyes to what Christopher was feeling- everything was over-exaggerated and intimidating. The combination of styles, as a whole, helped to increase the audience's understanding of what Christopher was going through, as the play was portrayed from his perspective.

Another aspect of the play that aided the audience's ability to comprehend with Christopher and his way of thinking, was the design of the set. This is because the stage was set up in an almost box like formation, each of the walls being used to project number figures, street addresses etc, this was an effective way of showing how overwhelming and oversized things were in Christopher's mind as everything shown on the walls was immense- towering over the stage and making the play even more experiential. The sound and lighting was also intense at some points and sometimes it seemed too much, but I believe this was another means of showing the audience that this sense of vastness was a daily feeling for Christopher and this, therefore, helped to immerse the audience in the play in another form- the play was a multi-disciplinary sensory display.

The actors performing did an excellent job at taking the audience on a rollercoaster of emotions, allowing them to be filled with joy before this emotion was counteracted with a sharp pang of frustration or tearfulness. A pinnacle point for me that prompted happiness and utter delight was when Christopher was given the gift of a puppy from his father: something he had longed for. It was not only the look of cheer contentment on Christopher's face that made me feel warm and blissful, but also the appearance of a wriggling, adorable puppy, so pleased to see their new owner. However, I also found that at particular points throughout the play I was angry and frustrated that the people Christopher was faced with on his travels treated him appallingly, as they could not interpret his body language or literal questions in the correct way. I think this frustrated the audience mainly because it highlighted how some people behave towards something they don't understand and, just like in our society, no-one could do anything to change the behaviour of these people, only watch in utter shock and discomfort. It was almost like a parallel reality between the real world and the world of Christopher, which unsurprisingly would have made some people feel uncomfortable.

The props used within National Theatre's performance of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* were incredible and increased the overall impact of the play. One of the main props that stood out to me as being marvellous was the train track that Christopher gradually put together over the course of the first act; it was only at the end of the first act that the train track suddenly came to life and the train on it began to move and all the buildings adjoined to it, all relating to London in some way I might add, lit up. This train track I feel was a representation of the journey of Christopher's life and how it sometimes got held up as a result of other people, but generally his ability to soldier on meant his destinations would always be reached through hard work and persistence. I think this is perhaps a message hidden within the play; no matter who you are and where you come from, anything is possible if you put your mind to it and fight hard- life is not about labels and categories but about personality and the determination one person has to succeed.

I think that watching this play has inspired me to take the time to investigate physical theatre in more detail, as I found Frantic Assembly's choreography dazzled me. I truly loved the whole performance and feel that the combined team of Frantic Assembly and National Theatre put on a tremendous performance which they can be truly and utterly proud of themselves for.

NOW go back through your booklet and ensure to read through your work and check for spelling and grammatical mistakes before you hand it in! Remember, to get a Distinction, your SPAG has to be spot on as well as using correct terminology

All of this information is available for you to edit and adapt on our Google Classroom and shared folderer. Any queries please email Mrs Curtis, Head of Drama sharon.curtis@rednockschool.org.uk