

Drama Curriculum Overview

Create, Perform, Respond: A Love for Theatre for Life

From Year 7 to Year 13, Drama at Tiffin rests on three things students do in every lesson: they create, they perform, and they respond to the work of others. The taught curriculum is supported by a programme of live theatre visits, concentrated at KS4 and KS5 where the evaluation of live theatre is formally assessed, and by three annual productions — Lower School, Sixth Form and Whole School — open to students at every stage as performers, designers and technicians.

KS3 Drama

Students arrive at Tiffin with widely differing experiences of Drama, from several years of it to none at all. Years 7 to 9 therefore build a shared foundation: the performance skills themselves — physical, vocal and collaborative — together with an understanding of the wider theatrical process, including set, costume, lighting and sound. Students learn to work as part of a creative team, and develop the confidence, communication and problem-solving that the subject demands and that serve them well beyond it. Practical work, regular performance and structured evaluative feedback allow students to refine these skills and find a creative voice of their own. The curriculum interweaves work on existing scripts, both contemporary and Shakespearean, with opportunities to create original devised drama.

- In Years 7 and 8, students develop their foundational skills through workshop and performance tasks, alongside written evaluation and homework. Year 7 is taught weekly across six units; Year 8 is taught fortnightly, across three six-lesson units. In each year students explore a traditional or historical style — Greek theatre and myth in Year 7, commedia dell'arte in Year 8 — alongside adapted narrative and contemporary storytelling, and encounter Shakespeare through *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Design is taught through the units rather than as a separate topic: costume and characterisation in Year 7, lighting and sound in Year 8.
- Year 9 is the first point at which students choose Drama, and the expected standard rises accordingly. Students move beyond naturalism and exaggerated movement into abstraction, symbolism and subtext, through *Blood Brothers*, *A Monster Calls*, *Physical Comedy*, *Theatre Design* and *Wrongfully Convicted* — the last of which examines miscarriages of justice and the ways in which narrative and institutional power shape what an audience believes. Students also build a working understanding of stage space and design, including stage configurations and the components of a design brief, which the GCSE course assumes from the outset.

KS4 Drama

GCSE Drama is examined across three components: a written paper on theatre and a set text; a devised performance with an accompanying log book; and a performance of two extracts from a published play. Our schemes of work are built around all three.

The organising principle at Key Stage 4 is that students rehearse each assessment before it counts. Every performance component is completed once in Year 10 as a mock — a genuine learning opportunity carrying no consequence for the final grade — before the assessed version in Year 11. The written paper is prepared the same way. *Noughts & Crosses* is taught practically rather than simply read, because the examination asks students to write as performers, directors and designers about a play they must be able to picture in performance. Evaluation of their own work, their peers' work and professional live theatre is developed throughout the two years rather than revised at the end.

For the final scripted performance, students choose from a range of approved playtexts so that every student works on material that suits their strengths, supported by a scheme of work that runs alongside. Most Tiffin students are performance candidates; design candidates are taught and assessed with the same expectations and the same level of support.

KS5 Drama

A Level Drama widens what students have already met, exposing them to practitioners, styles and traditions outside their experience — among them Stanislavski, Berkoff, Artaud, Kneehigh, Frantic Assembly and Headlong — through practical workshops concentrated in Year 12.

Like the GCSE, the A Level is examined across three components. For the written paper, students study two set texts: *Jerusalem* by Jez Butterworth and *Our Country's Good* by Timberlake Wertenbaker. They develop their understanding of plot, character and theme alongside the social, cultural and historical context in which each play sits and is performed. Because the paper requires students to write as directors, performers and designers,

the curriculum builds confidence in all three.

In the two performance components students apply a practitioner's methods to their own work. The first two examined extracts are chosen to stretch students and expand their range — for example, group performances of Metamorphosis in Year 12. For the final performance we work with each student to select a text that suits them and allows them to perform at their best. As at GCSE, design candidates are taught and assessed with the same expectations as performers.

KS3 Drama Curriculum

	Year 7 <i>'Confidence, Communication & Collaboration'</i>	Year 8 <i>'Engagement, Ensemble & Exaggeration'</i>	Year 9 <i>'Symbolism, Subtext & Staging'</i>
Autumn Term 1	Haunted House	Commedia dell'Arte	A Monster Calls
Autumn Term 2	Roald Dahl – Storytelling		Blood Brothers
Spring Term 1	Greek Theatre & 'Myths'	Treasure Island	Physical Comedy
Spring Term 2	Lord of the Flies		Theatre Design
Summer Term 1	A Midsummer Night's Dream	Murder Mystery	Wrongfully Convicted
Summer Term 2	The Princes in the Tower		Wrongfully Convicted – The Turning Point

KS4 Drama Curriculum - AQA

	Year 10	Year 11
Autumn Term 1	Course Introduction & Performance Skills - Development of Stage Terminology - Introduction to Noughts & Crosses & Epic Theatre - Characterisation/Practical Workshops (incl. Laura Wade's 'Posh' & Roy Williams' 'Sucker Punch')	Devising Rehearsal/Development and Assessment Prep - Development of C2 Devised Performances, for assessment in Autumn 2 - Assessment Preparation on C1, and Noughts & Crosses
Autumn Term 2	Mock Devising & Exam Development - Mock Devising Unit from Stimuli - Component 1: Exam Technique (4/8/12 Markers)	Devising Assessment and Introduction of Component 3 - Devising (C2) Assessment Performances - Completion of Devising 'Log Book' - Introduction to play/extract options for C3 (workshop/exploration of monologues)
Spring Term 1	Noughts & Crosses & Live Theatre - Noughts & Crosses Act 1, with developed understanding of character/themes/dystopian genre - Live Theatre Review	Component 3 & Mock Exam Preparation - Retrieval Practice/Exam Preparation for January Mock Exams - C3 Monologue Preparation - Live Theatre Visit/Opportunities
Spring Term 2	Noughts & Crosses Stage/Theatre Design - Noughts & Crosses Act 2, with developed understanding of stage design, including costume, set and technical design	Live Theatre & Stage Design - C3 Performance Exam (External Assessment) - Revision/Recap of Stage Design (including Tech, Set & Costume) - Live Theatre Visit & Review Consolidation
Summer Term 1	Mock C3 Performance & Exam Preparation - Mock 'Component 3' performances, typically from Nick Dear's 'Frankenstein' (primarily The Monster, Frankenstein & De Lacey) - Exam Revision/Preparation for EoY Exams	GCSE Exam - Final preparation for GCSE exam, going over exam technique, Noughts & Crosses and theatrical terminology
Summer Term 2	C2 Devising - Development of 'C2' devised pieces, in preparation for exam performances in Autumn of Year 11	

KS5 Drama Curriculum - AQA

	Year 12	Year 13
Autumn Term 1	Performance Skills & Practitioner Workshops <i>(including Berkoff, Kneehigh & Artaud)</i> C1 Drama and theatre - Section A, Jerusalem	C1 Drama and theatre - Section B, Our Country's Good C2 Creating original drama - Initial development
Autumn Term 2	C3 Making theatre - Performance of extract 1 & Reflective Report C1 Drama and theatre - Section A, Jerusalem	C1 Drama and theatre - Section B, Our Country's Good & Section C, Live Theatre C2 Creating original drama - Refinement & internally assessed performance
Spring Term 1	C2 Creating original drama - Mock Devising Practitioner/Performance Skills Workshops <i>(including Stanislavski, Headlong, Frantic Assembly)</i>	C3 Making theatre - Examined performance of extract 3 (Initial Development) Reflective Report
Spring Term 2	C1 Drama and theatre - Section B, Our Country's Good C3 Making theatre - Performance of extract 2 & Reflective report development	C3 Making theatre - Examined performance of extract 3 (Externally assessed) C3 Reflective Report
Summer Term 1	C1 Drama and theatre exam prep: Our Country's Good, Jerusalem and Live Theatre	C1 Drama and theatre exam revision (Jerusalem, Our Country's Good & Live Theatre)
Summer Term 2	Post Exam Feedback & Review <i>(including the consolidation of identified knowledge gaps, Teacher directed and supported project work and/or progressing to learn new material)</i>	