



DRAMA & THEATRE



STAFF

Mrs C Hellewell
Mr J Tennant
Miss P Gibb

SUPPORT

The Drama Department is committed to providing exceptional support, and we maintain an open-door policy. A Level students have priority access to the studio and exclusive access to our new 6th form rehearsal space, open from 2025. We offer 1:1 and small group sessions for support with written and practical work and encourage you to act as a TA in lower school classes, or in supporting extra-curricular activities and running drama-based enrichments such as primary performance tours. We also support you to refine performance skills through specialised workshops with industry professionals led by your strengths and interests.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to A Level Drama & Theatre at HGS which offers a rigorous, enriching, and creative experience for students who are passionate about performance, design, and the exploration of theatre as a powerful art form. We follow the Edexcel specification, which provides a balanced and flexible framework, allowing students to pursue either performance or design routes in their practical assessments.

Through the study and realisation of a diverse range of challenging and complex texts, students engage deeply with theatrical forms, styles, and practitioners—developing both their artistic insight and academic precision. The course demands academic written analysis, disciplined collaboration, and a high level of commitment, ensuring that students not only grow as theatre-makers but also develop highly transferable skills such as communication, critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, leadership and empathy.

Whether aspiring to a future in the arts or seeking a subject that complements wider academic ambitions, Drama and Theatre equips students with the confidence and competence to excel in both creative and scholarly pursuits.

In term one, you will perform or design for a monologue from any published play and collaborate on the performance of a group extract as a baseline assessment. You will also be introduced to the historical set text studied through practical exploration workshops, analytical writing and through the exciting challenge of staging the full play in the style of a practitioner for a live audience. We will also visit the theatre to begin analysing and evaluating the impact of live theatre in society.

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOUR FIRST LESSON

In every lesson, you should wear appropriate clothing for movement. You should also ensure that you have a notebook, pens, a pencil and highlighters. We will store a lot of work on our online platform but paper-based resources should be stored in an A4 Lever Arch Folder – please contact me if you require support sourcing one.

CLASSWORK, HOMEWORK AND INDEPENDENT STUDY

Class work in A Level Drama and Theatre is both varied and intellectually stimulating. Lessons will include, but are not limited to: the practical exploration and performance of set texts; workshops focused on influential theatre practitioners; the viewing, analysis and evaluation of recorded live theatre; the creation and development of devised work; structured approaches to examination questions; research activities; and the refinement of performances of published plays. This is a demanding, yet rewarding and dynamic course and homework plays a crucial role in supporting the development of key performance skills, the deepening of theoretical knowledge, and the enhancement of written exam technique. Students will also be expected to prepare for, and lead rehearsals, workshops, and sections of lessons, developing their abilities as creative leaders. Independent study will involve the organisation and execution of disciplined rehearsals, as well as the exploration of the ever-evolving theatrical landscape to enrich and inform their own artistic practice.

RESOURCES

You will be provided with copies of the set texts; Buchner's *Woyzeck* and Wade's *Colder Than Here*, as well as an A Level Study Guide and department developed structure and concept guidance. We also have a growing library of theatrical plays to explore, alongside subscriptions to various Live Theatre platforms such as Drama Online. Our three bespoke rehearsal spaces are a key resource alongside newly rigged lighting and sound equipment. Other useful resources and reading materials will be dependent upon design and performance interests, but some key ones to get you started include:

- **The Complete Brecht Toolkit" by Stephen Unwin** - Perfect for understanding Epic Theatre and its application in performance and analysis.
- **"The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre" by Scott Graham & Steven Hoggett** - Essential for understanding physical theatre and devising techniques used in contemporary performance.
- **"An Actor Prepares" by Konstantin Stanislavski** - A foundational text for naturalism.
- **"Theatre of the Oppressed" by Augusto Boal** - Explores participatory, political and social theatre.
- **National Theatre: On Demand. In Schools (online)** - Free access to high-quality productions, behind-the-scenes insights, and practitioner interviews.
- **"AQA and Edexcel A Level Drama and Theatre: The Revision Guide" by Rhinegold Education** - Focused guidance on how to approach Edexcel's written exams and practical components.
- **"Modern Drama: A Very Short Introduction" by Kirsten Shepherd-Barr** - Provides context on major movements and themes in modern drama.
- **Digital Theatre+ (Subscription Resource)** - High-quality streamed performances, study guides, and practitioner materials.
- **"The Cambridge Companion to Theatre History" edited by David Wiles and Christine Dymkowski** - A broad overview of historical developments and global theatre traditions.
- **"Drama and Theatre Studies at A Level" by Jonathan Neelands and Paul Bunyan** - A practical and theoretical introduction to key components of the A Level course.
- **Lighting Design: "Stage Lighting Design: The Art, the Craft, the Life" by Richard Pilbrow** - A comprehensive guide, written by one of the most influential lighting designers.
- **Set Design: "Theatre Design: Behind the Scenes with the Top Set, Lighting, and Costume Designers" by Babak A. Ebrahimian** - Offers insights into the creative processes of top designers, with practical examples and visual inspiration for set design.
- **Costume Design: "Costume: Performing Identities Through Dress" by Donatella Barbieri** - An academic and visual exploration of costume's role in shaping character, narrative, and meaning in performance.

