



'Bridging the Gap'

A LEVEL DRAMA





Preparation for iGCE Drama (International A Level)

Introduction

Congratulations! You have signed up to this shiny new course from Cambridge. The link to the specification is here: <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/Images/554592-2021-2023-syllabus.pdf>

I suggest as a starting point that you download this and read it through- it tells you everything about the way the course works.

So... What Now?

Already you are probably sick and tired of teachers telling you that A Level is tough. Yes, it is. The amount of independent learning you will be expected to do is probably triple that which you were required to do at GCSE.

When we say independent, we mean independent. You will frequently be asked to come along to lessons having read and made notes on *Insert subject here* - now most of the time this will be up to you. You will need to learn to research, to make notes and to use your time as effectively as possible. Your teacher (me) will base their planning on the fact that you have done your independent study and formulated your own ideas; they will be a little put out if you don't do that!

Over the Summer:

The following things could be done to prepare you for the start of the course:

- Reading – The set texts we will be studying in this course are:

Section A: **The Tempest** – Shakespeare

Section B: **Medea** - Euripides

Get a hold of a copy of both of them and have a jolly good read through – note the plot and context and do some background research, see if you can find a full-length theatrical version to watch!

- In addition, have a google session and make notes on some of the following theatrical practitioners and styles- it is these practitioners you will be asked to choose from when you come to create your devised work:

Practitioners: Antonin Artaud, Steven Berkoff, Bertolt Brecht, Finger Players Theatre, Frantic Assembly, Jerzy Grotowski, Katie Mitchell, Kneehigh, Robert Wilson.

Theatre traditions and styles: Absurd drama, Commedia dell'arte, Farce, Kabuki, Noh, Revenge tragedy

- Read at least three published plays of your own choosing (you have to do some scripted performance work so it may be a good idea for you to get an idea of the sorts of things you enjoy- google top plays for A level Drama students or look on Nick Herne Books' web page for ideas about play texts to read. There are also some suggestions on the reading list.
- WATCH- go to the theatre – In London I recommend a visit to The National Theatre, locally Bristol Old Vic and Bath Theatre Royal both have on some excellent theatre productions. Don't just watch musicals, there is no musical theatre content in the A level so you need to watch DRAMA rather than big budget blockbuster musicals.



- If you can't get to the theatre here are our digital subscription webpages- they both have a variety of fantastic productions on them you can watch from your own home!

Digital Theatre Plus

User:

digitaltheatre@tauntonschool.co.uk

Pass:

Stagedoor

Recommended Productions:

Lovesong, Things I Know To Be True, Much Ado About Nothing (Tennent), Macbeth (National Theatre)

Drama Online

User:

tauntonschool

Pass:

plays

Recommended Productions:

Jane Eyre, Frankenstein, Dara, The Crucible, Antigone

What else can I do?

Wow! You really are keen!

Ok well there are plenty of things you can do to prepare: Here are some ideas:

- YOUTUBE- Have a browse on there, watch other students and professional actors - give yourself some ideas about characterisation. Look up theatre practitioners on Youtube as well- it has to be better than staring at videos of funny cats right?
- Read one of the following texts:

Experimental Theatre - From Stanaslavski to Peter Brook- James Roose Evans (about £5 on Amazon)

Stanaslavski - An actor prepares.

The Empty Space - Peter Brook.

Read the recommendations in the Sixth Form reading list for Drama where you will find plays, texts and recommendations for podcasts and social media to check out as well!

Don't forget- the internet is your friend- spend some time browsing who knows what you will find?

What Should I Bring to Lessons?

I will tell you if we are working practically in a lesson the lesson before hand - I know you are required to wear suits for sixth form but these can be awfully restricting for you so I am happy if you want to bring joggers and a t-shirt for practical lessons if you prefer, however these must be worn to the lesson and not changed into during the lesson as this takes up a lot of time.

You will need one lever arch file, lined and plain paper, post it notes, highlighters, dividers, poly pockets.

If you want to make notes (and you can type quickly enough!) on a lap top or tablet that is also acceptable- as long as these notes are then printed off and put in your folder.