



Performing Arts

OCR GCE Unit G381 Professional practice: Skills development Unit Recording Sheet

RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

Please read the instructions printed at the end of this form. One of these sheets, suitably completed, should be attached to the assessed work of each candidate.

Unit Title	2 Professional practice: skills development	Unit Code	G381	Session	2	Year	0	L	O
Centre Name									
Candidate Name	REBECCA								
	Centre Number								
	Candidate Number								

Evidence: You produce: (a) a skills-development plan (to include a record of repertoire, roles or techniques attempted and skills achieved);
 (b) appropriate evidence, e.g. DVD, artefact, documentation, show reel, of three pieces of work (two in progress, one complete);
 (c) a commentary on how these examples show your own skills development;
 (d) an observation report on how these examples show your own skills development by an appropriately-skilled observer

Criteria		Teacher Comment	Location
<p>AO2.1.1: You demonstrate an approach that shows you recognise the importance of discipline and organisation; you listen to advice and sometimes review your development plan accordingly;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4]</p>	<p>AO2.1.2: you demonstrate a commitment to developing professional practice; you demonstrate discipline and organisation and make use of advice to adjust your plan for skills development;</p> <p>[5 6 7]</p>	<p>A very detailed skets portfolio that clearly shows planners, rehearsals and performance of the selected work. Evaluate comments can be found throughout, feedback is clearly used to shape progress and make adjustments to the developing work. A reflective log of the work is included with targets set. Thorough and detailed.</p> <p>Mark 10</p>	<p>Admin Plan Commentaries diaries Targets Goals → Progression of work on DVD</p>
<p>AO2.2.1: You demonstrate an approach that understands the importance of attendance, punctuality, reliability and disciplined practice, and mainly you achieve them; your performance skills show signs of development;</p> <p>[0 1 2 3 4 5 6]</p>	<p>AO2.2.2: you demonstrate a commitment to developing professional practice; minor weaknesses are outweighed by the strengths of the developing approach and increased breadth of skills and techniques;</p> <p>[7 8 9 10 11]</p>	<p>This candidate adopts a professional approach to all aspects of her work. She sets targets and goals to achieve and has a good realistic approach to achieving them. Outstanding progress can be clearly seen on the DVD as the candidate develops the work. Skills development is excellent.</p> <p>Mark 14</p>	<p>DVD Evaluations Goals+ Targets Action Plan Skills Audits.</p>
	<p>AO2.1.3: you demonstrate a disciplined, professional approach; you evaluate your own performance, respond to feedback and make realistic, informed adjustments to your development plan.</p> <p>[8 9 10]</p>		
	<p>AO2.2.3: you demonstrate a disciplined, professional approach – goals are normally achieved or, if not, there is a very clear understanding of how to achieve them; you demonstrate outstanding progress and achievement in development of your skills.</p> <p>[12 13 14 15]</p>		

Criteria		Teacher Comment	Location
A02.3.1: You understand technical terms and make some attempt to participate in design or performance work;	[0 1 2 3 4 5 6]		
A02.3.2: you demonstrate growing confidence and skill in achieving high standards in your design or performance work;	[7 8 9 10 11]		
A02.3.3: you demonstrate excellent self-management skills that underpin work of a professional standard in your design or performance work.	[12 13 14 15]	The candidate has clearly structured the work to enable development and progress over time. She displays excellent self management skills with attention to detail, organisation and planning. The development of the pieces. Performances are well rehearsed and delivered. Self management, assessment and skills development is evident.	Very organised action + development Plans DVD Teacher Comments
A03.1.1: Your technical ability is mostly fluent but the more demanding aspects may prove challenging; your commitment in production work is mostly consistent;	[0 1 2 3 4]		
A03.1.2: your technical ability shows competence and fluency that is sustained with only occasional slips; your commitment in production work is broadly consistent;	[5 6 7]		
A03.1.3: your technical ability shows a high degree of accuracy and confidence; your commitment across production work is of a consistently high standard.	[8 9 10]	Performance pieces clearly show a very high level of skills and techniques. The candidate is accurate in her delivery of the pieces. All performances are confidently approached. Performance work is consistently of a high standard. The candidate enjoyed both the challenge and process of approaching new repertoire pieces.	DVD photography Portfolio planning Evaluation Teacher Comments
		Mark	
		15	
		Mark	
		9	
		Total/50	
		48	
		Jan / June	
		2 0	
Please note: This form may be updated on an annual basis. The current version of this form will be available on the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk). The completed Centre Authentication form CCS160 must accompany the MS1 when it is sent to the moderator			
Please tick to indicate this work has been standardised internally			

Guidance on Completion of this Form

- One sheet should be used for each candidate.
- Please ensure that the appropriate boxes at the top of the form are completed.
- Please enter specific page numbers where evidence can be found in the portfolio, and where possible, indicate to which part of the text in the mark band the evidence relates.
- Circle the mark awarded for each strand of the marking criteria in the appropriate box and also enter the circled mark in the final column.
- Add the marks for the strands together to give a total out of 50. Enter this total in the relevant box.

An Introduction to Skills Development

The purpose of this unit of work is to enable me to develop the skills which will ultimately make me a good actress and performer.

Skills development is a lengthy and time-consuming process which is incredibly effective and can provide a noticeable improvement if carried out accordingly.

It is a necessity to any person learning the art of acting as there are many different skills within this profession such as; characterisation, sight-reading, and concentration, which constantly need to be developed and maintained. The skills development process proves to be an effective way of keeping track of all these skills you are attempting to develop and maintain and it is a good way of managing all these different skills at the same time. Furthermore; it provides the opportunity to record the progression you are making and enables you to revisit any stage of the process at any point to recover the development of a certain skill.

On a personal level, the unit will enable me to work with pieces of prose that I do not usually come across, and will challenge me as a performer in areas that otherwise, I would not usually access.

By the end of this unit I should have used the Skills Development Process to improve on each of the skills that I wish to amend and should have reached the aims I will outline within the process.

THE CYCLICAL PROCESS OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

1. Firstly I must decide on which skills I am going to develop and do intensive research on this chosen skills.

2. I must then put my reasearch into practice (this may include exercises and techniques)

5. Evaluate the progression, this can be based on feedback from yourself and from whitnesses of your development.

4. Identify the long and short-term aims for each skill and decide on how you are going to achieve them.

3. Review the improvement made, this can be done by giving yourself a mark out of ten and provide relevant feedback as to how to improve further.

The cyclical process is a continual course of action concerning skills development.

The idea is that each skill chosen can follow the same procedure. By using this course of development it is easy to identify improvement and recognize your skill level. The cyclical process can be referred back to at any stage of the development which helps to keep you focused and urges you to achieve higher levels. If you, at any point, are not happy with the progression you have made, you can simply go back to the previous steps and work through the cycle gain until you have reached the aims intended.

Skills Development Plan

2009/2010

Skill Needing Improvement	Objectives	Action to be taken	Skill Achieved
<p>Characterisation</p> <p>10th November 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have the technique and focus to perform as a serious and effective character in a political piece of performance. • Research using books, life experiences and the internet to be able to fully understand and embody the character, realistically. • Research Bertolt Brecht to fully understand the purpose and objective of the character and be able to bring this to the performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use websites such as Google and Wikipedia to research the play, monologue or duologue to help gain a realistic perspective of each characters emotion at each point of the performance. - Use websites such as YouTube to explore how other people may have adapted the role. This will give me ideas on how I could perform the character. - Research the practitioner, director or writer, focussing on their purpose for the character and the performance as a whole. - Work with Miss Craig to interpret and respond to character based feedback. - Create a brief character study - Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your characterisation and put this into practice. 	
<p>Coordination</p> <p>11th November 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop my coordination in acting. • To combine the various craft skills needed in the performance, i.e. acting and the physicality of the piece. • To be able to add stress and emphasis at different points of the performance whilst still acting and moving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your coordination and put this into practice. - Go through the piece and highlight the areas that we need to apply stress and emphasis so that I am fully aware of when I need to do so. - Rehearse the piece regularly so that I will be comfortable with applying all techniques at the same time. - Work with 'Miss' Craig, by responding to her feedback I will be able to improve my coordination as she is working closely with us throughout the performance process. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and develop my confidence in solo pieces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To constantly be pushing my own boundaries, working in 	

<p>Confidence</p> <p>October/November 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be confident in group pieces in order to raise the moral of the group. • To be confident in applying my own ideas to a performance. 	<p>areas that I feel uncomfortable in, in order to find confidence in those areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To research other actors/actresses interpretations of a role to see if my ideas are suitable. - Work with Miss Craig, other peers and the group through performance, workshops and games to build relationships whereby we are all comfortable and confident in the group and feel able to voice ideas and suggestions. - Research excersises and techniques which will help to develop my confidence. 	
<p>Articulation/diction</p> <p>October/November 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To lose my accent. • To improve my articulation and diction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To research different exercises that can help to improve articulation/diction and to then put this into practice 	
<p>Projection</p> <p>October/November 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the projection required in different pieces and at different points in a performance. • To fully understand how and why projection may be altered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research how and why projection may be altered, using the internet and books. - Research different exercises and techniques which can help to improve and put to use your use of projection and put this into practice. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know where and why the projection may change in each of my performances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use resources such as the internet to watch other peoples performances to see where they alter projection. 	
<p>Gesture/Facial Expression</p> <p>October/November 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the importance of facial expressions and gestures in performance. • To be able to interpret which facial expressions and gestures are relevant to different emotions. • To be able to interpret which facial expressions and gestures are relevant to the characters I am playing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research the importance of the use of gesture and facial expression in performance. - Research how emotions can affect facial expressions and gestures. - Apply different facial expressions and gestures to my characters. 	
<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that my communication with my teacher is of a high standard in order to improve to the best of my capabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use drama games, techniques and exercises to build relationships with my teacher and fellow group members. - Listen to other people's ideas and give your own equally. 	

<p>October/November 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that my communication within my group is of a high standard so that we can produce work to the best of our capabilities. • To be able to engage fully with an audience during performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Research, using the internet and books, how you can engage with an audience whilst performing. 	
<p>October/November 2009</p> <p>Improvisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve my performance skills. • To gain confidence in the area of improvisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Research different techniques of improvisation and why it is important in performance and then apply this to my performance. – Research different exercises and activities which can help to improve my improvisation skills and put this into practice. 	
<p>October/November 2009</p> <p>Stage Presence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the term 'stage presence' and how it can be applied. • To improve my stage presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Research the term 'stage presence' and understand how this can be changed whether taking lead or supporting another actor/actress. – Visit a live performance to gain a full perspective of how stage presence is highly important. – Be aware of what i can apply to my performance in order to improve my stage presence. 	
<p>October/November 2009</p> <p>Clarity of Voice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve my clarity of voice • To understand why having good clarity of voice is important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Research different techniques and exercises that can help to improve your clarity of voice and put this into practice. – Research the importance of having a good clarity of voice. 	

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT:

IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES I WILL DISCUSS MY RESEARCH OF THE DIFFERENT SKILLS THAT I HAVE DECIDED TO DEVELOP. THIS MAY CONSIST OF THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH SKILL AND WILL PARTICULARLY FOCUS ON EXERCISES AND TECHNIQUES WHICH WILL HELP TO DEVELOP THESE SKILLS. MOST OF THE ACTIONS IN MY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PLAN REQUIRE TO BE SPECIFICALLY LINKED TO EACH PIECE I HAVE CHOSEN, SEPARATELY (FOR EXAMPLE) RESEARCHING THE PLAY/MONOLOGUE WILL DEPEND ON WHICH PIECE I AM FOCUSING ON), THEREFORE THEY WILL BE PART OF MY ACTION PLAN WHICH I HAVE CREATED FOR EACH SEPARATE PIECE.

CHARACTERISATION:

- Definition of characterization
- Research different techniques and exercises which can help to develop your characterization
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

CHARACTERISATION - A DESCRIPTION OR PORTRAYAL OF THE MOST TYPICAL OR IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF SOMEONE OR SOMETHING

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

Observation exercise:

Take a trip to a public place where sitting and watching people could occur. Some good places for this activity are a shopping centre, an airport, a sporting event or anyplace where people move around as a natural part of the event. Pick a movement trait to observe such as how fast or slow people walk or how people gesture with their hands when they talk. It is helpful to write down quick notes or to draw sketches of the traits you observe. Later, in private, try to duplicate the observed movements yourself. As you duplicate the movement, also imagine the type of person you watched and try to understand why they moved the way they did. Use your imagination. Study individuals as they are feeling different emotions. Do this in a public place where you can watch people without being noticed. As you hear people arguing or laughing, watch how their bodies change and their gestures become faster or slower. If a person looks sad to you, try and decide exactly what the person has done to make you think they are unhappy. You are observing the effects of emotion on the outward appearance of a person. This is important in character study considering that very few characters go through a play without feeling any emotion. You may want to make notes on the various elements of the visual display of emotion.

Imitation exercise:

Listen carefully to your favorite actor on television or in a movie. Try to imitate the way that person talks. This is one way to begin "collecting" vocal patterns to use in characters you will develop later. Listen carefully to individuals who have strong accents or rent a video specifically selected for the accents of the characters in the film. Try to mimic the accent used by these individuals. You will probably be most comfortable doing this in private, but getting a friend to listen after you have been practicing for a while is also helpful.

Life summary exercise:

Look through a magazine and find an interesting picture of a person in an everyday situation. Some examples might include a person eating in a restaurant or a person watching a sporting event. Study the picture and use your imagination to create a "life summary" of the person. Decide what their name is and where they went to school. Imagine how they sound when they talk and how they look when they walk. Fill in all the details about their life including favorite food and their most embarrassing moment. After you feel you really know the background of this imaginary person, write a monologue about what the person was thinking the moment the picture was taken. Rehearse the monologue using the voice you created for the person and perform your monologue for a friend.

COORDINATION:

- Definition of coordination
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your coordination
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

COORDINATION – TO MAKE (VARIOUS, SEPARATE THINGS) WORK TOGETHER

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

Cross Crawl:

1. Stand with your feet slightly apart, arms at your sides. Lift your right knee toward your chest as you cross your left hand over the midline of your body, placing the hand, palm open, to the outside of the right knee.

2. Return to the starting position, and repeat with the right hand and left knee to complete 1 set. Do at least 12 sets. You can perform this move quickly and rhythmically to build energy, or very slowly to emphasize balance.

A regular physical warm up that i participate in:

This warm up enables the participant to stretch the entire body which builds the ability to coordinate, it consists of several stages and is usually done with music in the background.

1. In a standing position roll each shoulder in a backwards direction slowly, and then repeat this movement in the opposite direction.
2. Maintaining the standing position, lower your head onto your chest and gently circle it from side to side. Finally, return to the original position.
3. In a standing position, let your head drop to your chest. Slowly relax forward from the waist so that your hands are dangling near to the floor. Keep your legs relaxed, not stiff. Slowly raise yourself up, uncurling the spine. Note, that your head must be the last thing to come up.
4. After returning to a standing position, stretch upwards with both arms in a streamlined position, with your head between each arm. Interlock your fingers and stretch further, holding the stretch for ten seconds.
5. In a standing position, let your head drop to your chest. Slowly relax forward from the waist, so that your hands are dangling near the floor once again. Then, walk your hands forward, with your feet shoulder-length apart. Bring your feet together and lower yourself to the floor until your body is totally flat.
6. From this position tuck your legs in so that you are sitting on your feet. Pull your upper body backwards, so that your upper body is resting on your knees. Finally reach forwards with both arms, interlock your fingers and stretch further, holding the stretch for ten seconds.
7. Return to the standing position and shake all parts of the body loosely.

'Leader' game:

After stretching all of your body thoroughly, you are then able to participate in more strenuous exercises which help to get your body working with good coordination.

In groups, take it in turns to be the 'leader'. When you are the leader you have the ability to travel around the provided space in whatever way you wish, for example: star jumps, rolling across the floor, gambols or jogging. The other members in the group have to imitate the leaders movement.

CONCENTRATION:

- Definition of concentration
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your concentration
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION.

CONCENTRATION – THE DIRECTION OF ALL THOUGHT OR EFFORT TOWARDS ONE PARTICULAR TASK, IDEA, OR SUBJECT

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

The seven states of tension:

The seven states of tension can also be used as an exercise to improve: characterization, gesture and facial expression, improvisation and maintaining character.

The seven states of tension consists of seven different levels of tense emotion. These tense emotions are common states which you may have to portray when acting. Each different state aims to help you improve that particular emotion and to gain full concentration. Therefore; every state has different instructions to ensure optimum improvement.

To participate in the seven states of tension, identify which of the following states of tension you have to portray and then follow the instructions to reach that particular state of tension.

Very relaxed: Lie on the floor and imagine something has taken over your body and you cannot stand up as if a force is forcing you to sink into the ground. Now, very slowly, begin to stand barely moving.

California: Imagine that everything in your life is going well, you are happy. You are in a peaceful warm place.

Neutral: Walk around a space showing no emotion at all. Nothing is bothering you, worrying you, you are not concerned about how you look or about how other people see you.

Alert: Imagine you cannot concentrate on anything and that you are always moving quickly. You are unable to keep still and your eyes are never rested on any object or person for more than a few seconds.

Direct: Act like you know what you want and you know how you are going to get it. You know where it is and where you want it. You are determined to get it.

Grand passion: Imagine you have a strong, mixed set of emotions.

Catatonic: Imagine something has shocked you, good or bad and it has forced an immediate reaction, it takes your breath away.

ARTICULATION/DICTION:

- Definition of concentration
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your concentration
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

ARTICULATION – THE COHERENT EXPRESSION OF THOUGHTS, IDEAS, OR FEELINGS

DICTION – THE CLARITY WITH WHICH SOMEBODY PRONOUNCES WORDS WHEN SPEAKING OR SINGING

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

Tongue twisters:

The most notified way of exercising your speech is through the means of tongue twisters. Tongue twisters do not only help your articulation and diction but they also help to gain concentration.

Tongue twisters exercise different areas of your mouth they are categorized by the following groups: lips, tongue (and teeth), palate and mixed.

- The lips focus on the sounds of: p, b, m and w

“Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper. A peck of pickled pepper, Peter Piper picked. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper, where's the peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper Picked?”

- The tongue (and teeth) focus on the sounds of l, d, s and t

“Leave the lazy lion alone”

“Des does a dastardly deed.”

- The palate focuses on the sounds of c, k and g

“Giggling Katie Coe kicked the garden gargoyle. The garden gargoyle kicked the giggling Katie Coe.”

- Mixed focuses on all letters

“Red leather, yellow leather”

“Red lorry, yellow lorry”

“Red lolly, yellow lolly”

“Peggy Babcock, Peggy Babcock”

“Round the rugged rock, the ragged rascal ran”

VOCAL PROJECTION:

- Definition of vocal projection
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your vocal projection

- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

VOCAL PROJECTION — PRODUCING SPEECH OR SOUND AT A CERTAIN RATE

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

To develop good voice projection, remember this principle: your strength doesn't depend on your mouth or throat, but on your lungs. In other words, when people yell until their throat is sore and they can't speak anymore, they're just using their throat voice (just clanging their vocal cords together) and not using the air support they could for a full, strong voice.

1. Sitting straight, place one hand on your belly and another behind your back opposite your hand on your belly.
2. Breath in, attempting to move both hands out as far as possible (it takes a lot of strength to get your hand on your back to move; don't worry if it doesn't). This is belly breathing. Notice how it feels; this is how you want to breath when you speak in order to use your full lung capacity and get the fullest, strongest, and richest sound.
3. Exhale quickly, but make no sound as you do so. Sound is an indication of tension.
4. Breath in again. Now, when you exhale, say the first letter of the alphabet.
5. Continue until you reach Z. As you progress through the alphabet, pretend that with each letter you are speaking to a target farther and farther away. Pause if you get lightheaded, and wait a few seconds before you go again. By the time you reach the end, you should be very loud and strong. If you're still breathing right, you will be stronger than you could be breathing normally

GESTURES/FACIAL EXPRESSION:

- Definition of gestures
- Definition of facial expression
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your gesture/facial expression
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

GESTURES — 1. A MOVEMENT MADE WITH A PART OF THE BODY IN ORDER TO EXPRESS MEANING OR EMOTION OR TO COMMUNICATE INSTRUCTION, 2. AN ACTION INTENDED TO COMMUNICATE FEELINGS OR INTENTIONS, 3. THE USE OF BODY MOVEMENTS TO COMMUNICATE.

FACIAL EXPRESSION - A LOOK ON SOMEBODY'S FACE, CONVEYING A THOUGHT OR FEELING

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

Muscles under the eyes:

1. Press your fingers onto your temple area and slightly pull them back. This puts tension on the muscles that surround the eyes, and it also prevents lines around the eyes from forming as you do the exercise.
2. Now, with your fingers giving resistance to the muscles around your eyes, close your eyes tightly. You will feel these muscles working strongly as you hold the contraction perhaps a second or even more. Do as many repetitions as you feel comfortable with. I usually do three sets of twenty reps.

COMMUNICATION/ TEAMWORK:

- Definition of communication
- Definition of teamwork
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your communication/ teamwork.
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

COMMUNICATION — THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN PEOPLE, E.G. BY MEANS OF SPEAKING, WRITING, OR USING A COMMON SYSTEM OF SIGNS OR BEHAVIOR

TEAMWORK — 1. A COOPERATIVE EFFORT BY A GROUP OR TEAM, 2. WORK PRODUCED BY A GROUP OR TEAM

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

1. The human knot

- Divide participants into small groups of six to eight people.
- Each group stands in a tight circle. Ask participants to place their hands into the centre and close their eyes. Each hand must link with another hand. Once everyone is holding two other hands they can open their eyes.
- Now tell the group they have to untie the knot and make a circle without letting go of each other.

2. Four UP

- The participants all sit in a circle.

- Explain that you are taking them to a strange planet with a very strange atmosphere. In this atmosphere they cannot speak, as sound does not travel. The planet also has a very weird gravity system. Only four people can stand up at once. It is also impossible to stand for more than ten seconds.
- The challenge for survival on this planet is for the group to keep four people standing up all of the time, for not more than ten seconds each. The group will need to co-operate using non-verbal communication.
- Explain that this activity has shown that they are able to co-operate with others without even talking... They have the skills, they just need to put things into action...

3. Make a team with...

- Explain to the group that when you shout out an instruction, the participants must build a team as quickly as possible according to the instructions.
- For example, 'Get into a team of three', 'Get into a team of people with the same shoe size', or 'Get into a team of people who have the same number of brothers and sisters'.
- They could emphasise that they have built their team by holding hands and shouting, or if more appropriate by sitting down.

IMPROVISATION:

- Definition of improvisation
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your coordination
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

IMPROVISATION

1. TO PERFORM OR MAKE QUICKLY FROM MATERIALS AND SOURCES AVAILABLE WITHOUT PREVIOUS PLANNING
2. TO PERFORM (A POEM, PLAY, PIECE OF MUSIC ETC.) COMPOSING AS ONE GOES ALONG.

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

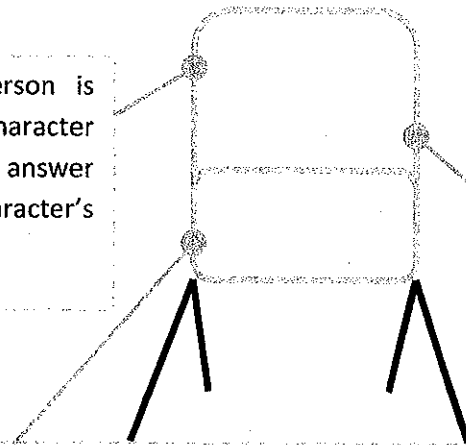
Improvisation enables you to show your abrupt creativity. Although improvisation often 'puts you on the spot' it means you can manipulate an idea or script and make

it your own. You can use this device as a tool of skills-building, by joining in various activities to adapt to different situations.

For example: in a previous lesson we joined in an exercise which forced the whole class to improvise. We all sat in a circle and one by one we all had to join the scene, speak and acting accordingly. Improvisation always proves to be exciting, humorous, serious and unpredictable.

Another common improvisation exercise is 'hot seating':

Hot-seating is when a person is asked to adapt to their character and are often expected to answer questions which fit their character's personality.



This exercise is called hot-seating due to its quick-fire questions and also because of the pressure it puts on the person being questioned, it is an effective improvisation activity.

Hot seating puts people 'on the spot' and forces them to improvise and think quickly, it is advantageous because it makes the person really think about the reactions of their character and ultimately gives them a deeper understanding of their character in the process.

STAGE PRESENCE:

- Definition of stage presence
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your stage presence
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

STAGE PRESENCE — AN IMPRESSIVE APPEARANCE OR BEARING ON STAGE

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

There are many factors which can be considered when hoping to maintain an audience's attention:

1. Always face the audience

2. Pace
3. Expression
4. Costumes and props
5. Vocal colour

Always face the audience:

CLARITY OF VOICE:

- Definition of clarity of voice
- Research different techniques or exercises which can help to develop your clarity of voice
- Put this into practice.

DEFINITION:

CLARITY OF VOICE — CLEARLY EXPRESSED VOCALLY

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

1. Practice jaw exercises to enhance clarity of speech. Use a mirror to aid you in this step. Here are three exercises to help. These also help relax the jaw, making speech a lot clearer:
2. Make wide chewing motions while humming gently.
3. Stretch every muscle in your jaw and face. Open your mouth as wide as possible (as if you were about to yawn), while moving your jaw in circles, and sideways.
4. Open your mouth wide, as in the previous exercise, and shut it again. Repeat 5 times.
5. Have a conversation with yourself in front of the mirror. It may sound silly, but it does help. Again, overexaggerate your words as you speak.
6. Gargle some lukewarm water with a pinch of salt. This helps relieve tension in the throat.
7. Avoid speaking with clenched teeth.
8. Don't rush when speaking. Talk deliberately, but not so slow that you are a robot.
9. Swallow excess saliva. Saliva left in the mouth can result in mumbling and distortion of consonants such as "S" and "K".

Sight-reading:

- Definition of sight-reading
- The importance of sight reading

- How to prepare yourself before sight reading
- How to sight read

DEFINITION:

1. SIGHT-READING IS THE ABILITY TO PERFORM A SCRIPT WITH NO, OR VERY LITTLE PREPARATION, IN A WAY THAT THEY HAVE INTERPRETED THE TEXT.

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES:

THE IMPORTANCE OF SIGHT READING:

Sight-reading is a vitally important part of any actor's career; it increases the actor's ability to alternate between different scripts. This skill is particularly useful when taking part in an audition, as directors will focus on how you interpret the text and concern it as an important skill that you need to have.

HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF BEFORE SIGHT-READING:

Before sight-reading it is important to prepare yourself. This 'preparing' consists of warming up, and understanding the importance of health and safety in this area. By doing this you will reduce the risk of injuries on stage and are also decreasing the risk of straining your voice. Furthermore; these preparations are beneficial to the standard of your performance.

HOW TO SIGHT-READING:

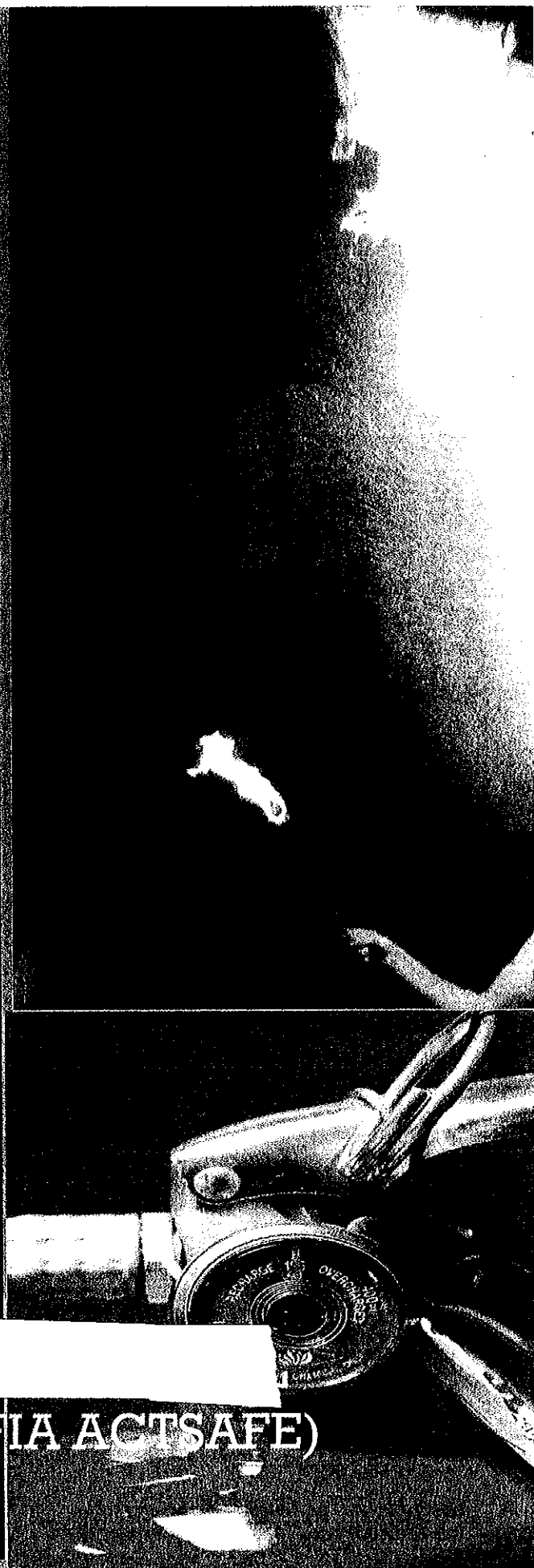
The way that you start your sight-reading piece will affect the way that you deliver the whole script. Therefore; to gain an understanding of what the piece is about, it is recommended to begin by sight-reading the first two paragraphs alone. This will help your interpretation of the text.

Whilst sight-reading, there are a number of details about your character that you should take into consideration:

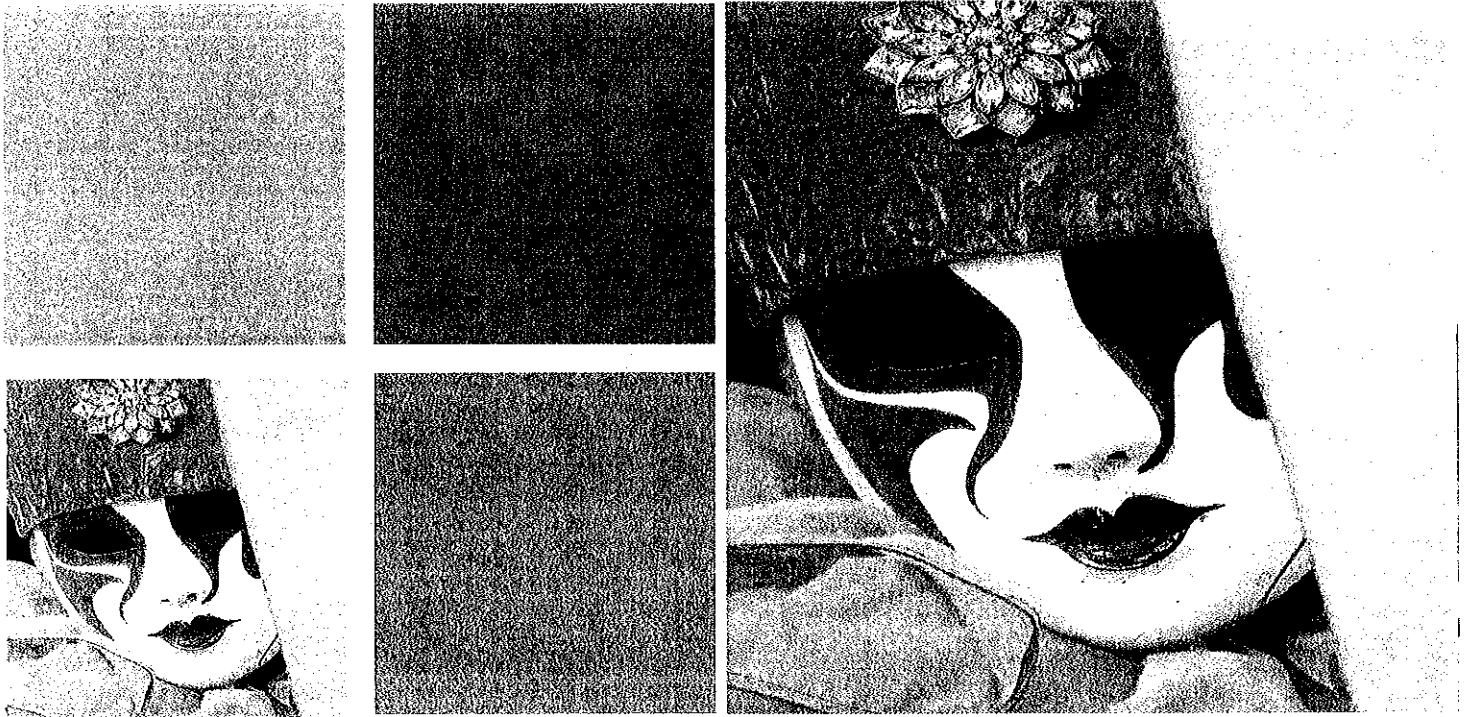
- Check for any emotional change that takes place in the text.
- Any insights given into the character's personality or background.
- Accent
- Vocal or bodily techniques

When sight-reading the movement of the character is not necessary; however, it is still important that the actor understands how the character should stand. This standing position is called the 'centering position'. By maintaining this position the actor will feel more comfortable with what they are doing and the lack of movement will increase the effect on the audience. Also, the 'centering' position allows the actor

Health and Safety



(TAKEN FROM FIA ACTSAFE)



Costumes

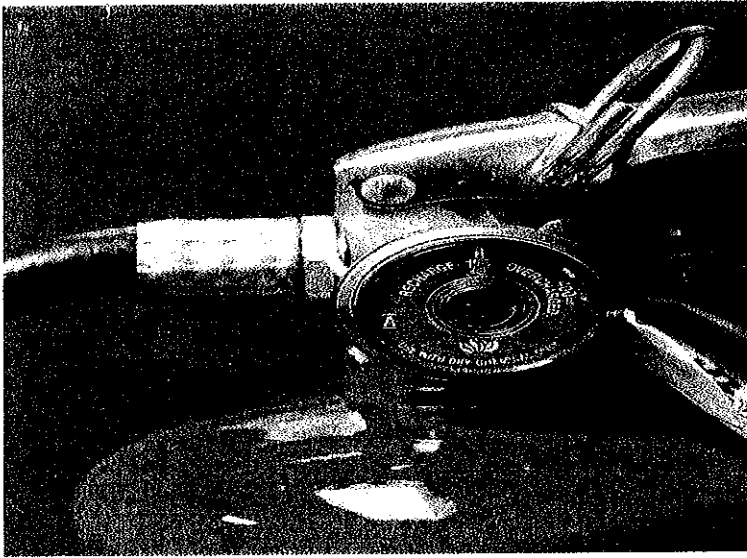
Any item that is worn, not carried or handled, by the performer, including wigs, masks and footwear

With very few exceptions, costumes are invariably used on rehearsals and performances. Their shape, size and combination obviously change ever so often, depending on such things as the choreography, stage design, etc. Your body and your ability to move will inevitably be affected by the specific outfit you wear. Sometimes costumes may have an adverse effect on your body, impair your performance or even put you and other around you at risk. It is therefore important that you take some time to evaluate your costumes and detect any inconsistency at the earliest possible date.

Costumes should be tailored to your age and size. They should not hinder your movements unreasonably on and off stage. Whenever special staged movements are required, your outfits should be customized to make that possible at no discomfort.

Needless to say, they should be clean, stored in pristine conditions and integrate safely with all other elements of the production.

- ▣ Look out for loose parts, wear & tear and report anything you find suspicious before you wear your costumes
- ▣ Make sure you inform the company about any allergies that may not allow you to wear a given fabric
- ▣ Check your costumes before wearing them and make sure they are clean, especially if they are to be used in direct contact with your skin
- ▣ If possible, make sure you wear the same costumes from the beginning of rehearsal throughout the performance
- ▣ Try to anticipate the variety of staged movements and test your costumes in all postures you will take during your performance
- ▣ Do not hesitate to report any impairment caused by your costumes. Pay particular attention to your field of vision and your ability to breathe and hear normally
- ▣ Should you be required to handle open flames or act near one, find out whether the fabric of your costumes is flame resistant or adequately treated with flame retardant. Do not use the costumes unless they are safe to use next to a flame
- ▣ After each use, take particular care in handling your costumes and store them neatly where they can be picked up for cleaning and further use



Fire safety

All safety measures and operational procedures to prevent the effects of a fire

Fire safety is paramount in live performance, especially in theatres, where flames can quickly spin out of control and become lethal. Emergency procedures and a fire evacuation plan should be made available in writing and fire drills should be routinely scheduled, especially each time someone is new to the environment.

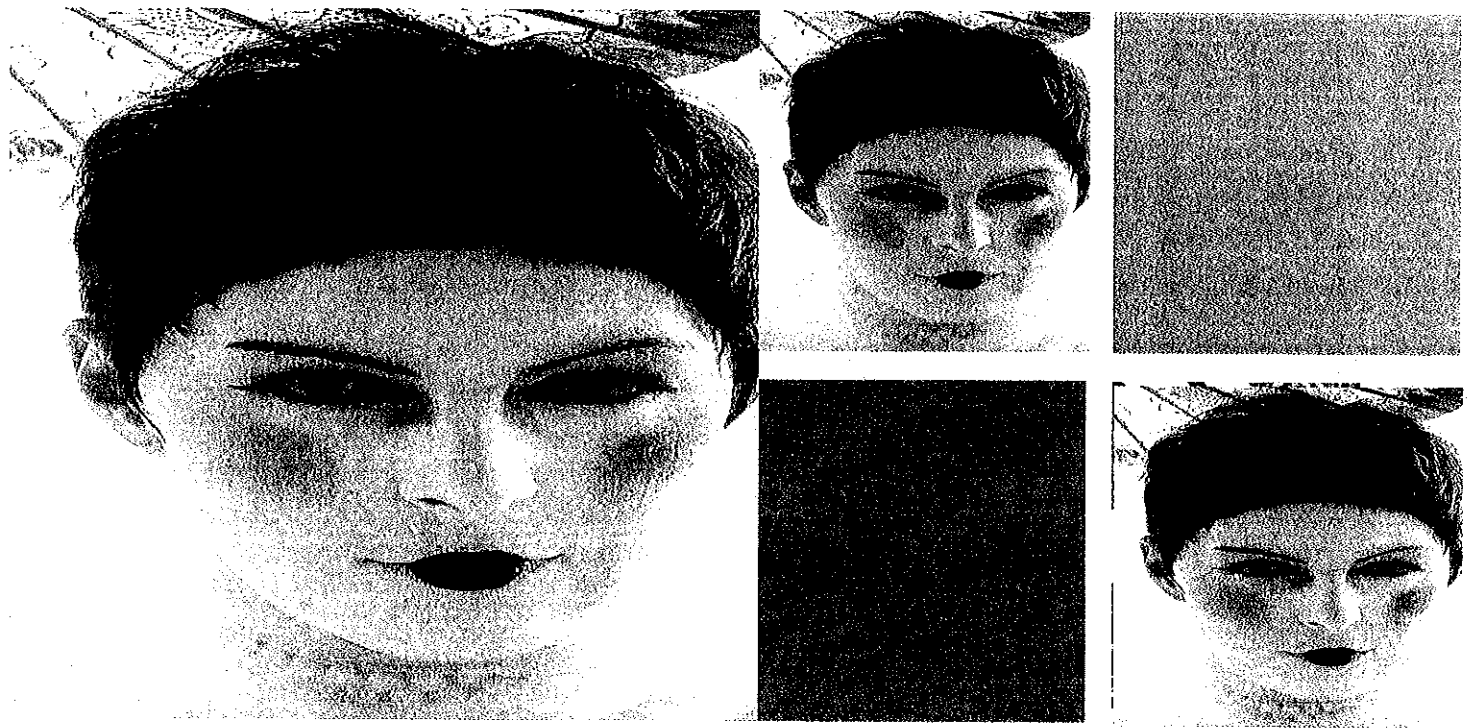
There should be emergency exits, clearly marked, closed but not locked nor obstructed, provided with panic handles and opening towards the exterior.

Fire extinguishers should be functional, maintained as required and their use should be carefully described during fire drills.

All curtains, set, props and scenery should be fireproof. Costumes should be fireproofed if any naked flames are to be used on the production.

All wiring and technical equipment should be in pristine conditions and be regularly checked by the production. All electrical equipment should be waterproof and isolated. Plugs should be firmly inserted in their sockets or disconnected.

- ▣ Read the written emergency procedures and the fire evacuation plan carefully as you familiarise with your new working environment. If you can see none, ask the set manager
- ▣ Do not smoke out of designated smoking areas. Always use ashtrays and stub your cigarettes out completely before you leave the smoking area
- ▣ Only throw paper or other inflammable material in the designated bins. Never dump them on an ashtray or near it
- ▣ Do not play with fire at any time. Should you be required to handle a naked flame or to smoke on stage, do so in full compliance with the instructions that are given to you
- ▣ Remember: fire doors are there for your safety and that of others around you. Do not wedge them open, obstruct or block them in any way, anytime
- ▣ If pyrotechnic effects are to be used, please refer to the specific chapter in these guidelines
- ▣ Never take fire drills lightly: in case of panic, even the most elementary rules are often overlooked
- ▣ Remember: fire safety does not stop when you leave the workplace. Make sure you do not leave behind you something that may incidentally cause a fire, e.g. a spray can in direct sunlight, a loosely plugged electrical device, etc



Makeup

Face products, hair products and others, intended for use on the performers' body – including prosthetic sculpting, moulding and casting techniques to create advanced cosmetic effects

Makeup is a rather common feature in the life of a performer. It can range from basic facial cosmetic treatment to tattoos or even – though this is more recurrent in film and television – very elaborate creations meant to give to the body and/or face a radically different appearance.

A performer's makeup can raise health and safety concerns and requires particular care. As cosmetics are directly in touch with the skin, hygiene and the prevention of allergy reactions are of paramount importance. The protracted stationary pose required by very extensive makeup sessions might cause body stiffness, cramps and even faints. Sometimes, when makeup is particularly heavy, performers may experience anxiety and a disturbing sense of uneasiness.

Safely removing makeup after a performance is equally important and can also be a rather demanding experience, particularly when added to performance fatigue and to stage-induced emotion or stress. The specific products used to this purpose need to remove all makeup, while restoring the skin's natural tone and moisture.

- ▣ As you are about to makeup for the rehearsal or performance, make sure that the applicators you use are clean. The sharing of sponges, puffs, brushes, sticks, wedges, removers and other tools is not recommended. You should preferably use your own material. Do not use sprays in a very confined space, with no ventilation
- ▣ If you have a skin condition, sensitive skin or allergies, remember to check the ingredients in the cosmetics before you use them. This should be done every time you buy new or replacement products, since manufacturers sometimes change the components in their products
- ▣ Should your makeup be the task of a professional, make sure he is informed about any allergy you may have and know about
- ▣ After the performance, all makeup should be removed from your body, using non-toxic, specific products. Once again, be aware of the substances in those products, as they too may trigger allergies or be aggressive on your skin, and refrain from using someone else's tools. Check that everything you use is clean and proper
- ▣ Any far-reaching makeup requirement should be accurately discussed with you in advance. It should always be carried out with non-toxic materials and by a makeup professional, as it can be potentially dangerous if carried out incorrectly
- ▣ The tougher the makeup, the more important it is to experience it during the early stages of rehearsal, thus recreating the same conditions that you will later experience on stage

Health & Safety

Health and safety is a very important issue to look at when we are rehearsing and performing. There are health and safety rules and regulations which must be followed by performers during rehearsals and performance. These rules and regulations are in place to make sure that all performers remain safe and they are an important measure to make sure that everything runs smoothly without any accidents or injuries, they are a preventative measure for any activity in the performing arts industry including our ensemble performance. Health and Safety procedures should be discussed with all performers and crew, to make sure that everyone is aware of them and that the level of risk of injury or harm is reduced.

The following points are the main health and safety points that must be completed/followed when rehearsing and also in performances including my performances and rehearsal sessions, especially being part of the cast, myself:

- Cast members must listen to and follow the instructions given by members of staff/crew/stage manager/director.
- It is important that the Crew discuss with the cast, the placement of specialist machines such as lighting and smoke machines offstage to make sure nobody slips over them.
- The set, wings and backstage areas are to be kept clear at all times, to prevent injury from falling over any props or scenery that may be used.
- Props must be stored away on the specific tables and not left on the floor after use on stage.
- The stage, set and backstage area is our working environment.
- Appropriate footwear or bare feet only on stage, this is to make sure that no-one slips over or any sharp objects such as nails from the stage, don't cause injury or harm to any cast member or crew.
- Costumes must be secured in such a way that they do not cause the wearer to trip or impede the movement of other people on the stage. We need to make sure that any costume which comes over the ankle in length is monitored to make sure it doesn't become a hazard for the wearer or anyone in close proximity to the wearer, to cause them to slip and harm themselves.
- Make yourself aware of the boundaries of the stage area; this is indicated by white tape in backstage areas. This is to make sure that the risk of anyone slipping or falling off the stage is reduced. We also need to make sure that cast and crew are familiar with the scenery and different stage level blocks used to make sure that everyone is comfortable with these boundaries.
- It is important that nobody leans on the wings, as they are not solid wall and leaning on them could cause injury to the cast or crew.
- A full body/vocal warm up should be completed before all physical and vocal activity to make sure that everyone is warmed up enough to perform without causing any harm to their bodies including the voice.
- All lighting rigs/scenery need to be checked to make sure that it is safe and secure, to prevent any lights etc. from falling on any cast members.
- A fire briefing must be given by an experienced staff member to make sure the cast/crew/audience are informed of the fire exits and the technical crew need to make sure that the fire exit illuminated lights during the performance are working. All fire equipment need to be in place for example, fire extinguishers and fire blankets and well labelled to be used and located in any event.
- A member of the production crew must be informed beforehand to make sure that they are aware of any medical issues that the cast/crew may have. This is important so, they can make adjustments to the show, a good example of this, a cast member with asthma needs to give their inhaler to a member of staff. A good example of audience health and safety is to check if anyone has epilepsy because any strobe/specialist lighting needs to be adjusted for the performance.

- CHILDREN & LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE

GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

Establishment:	Date: 19 th April 2010	Assessor(s) (1) (2)
Task/Activity/Location/Work Equipment: Rehearsals/Showcase		GRA070

PART A:

Hazards identified:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Falls from stage lighting gantry - Falls from access equipment - Falling equipment (e.g. lighting) from height - Falls through open trap door - Falls from stage or stage steps - Scenery collapse or props falling - Fire - Inadequate supervision - Accidents/ill health 	Risk Rating (tick) (without controls in place) HIGH ✓ MEDIUM LOW
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PART B:

Who is at risk (tick)	Employees	✓	Pupils	✓	Visitors/Public	✓
	Contractors		Others (specify)			

PART C:

Control measures required to manage health and safety:	
1.	Pupils must be given clear instructions before undertaking any drama activities. The instructions must be given by staff that are experienced and trained in the use of any equipment and activities.
2.	Pupils must not work at height.
3.	Consideration of lighting rigs which can be lowered to ground level for the fitting of lights should be given. This should minimise the need for working at height.
4.	Where work at height is required, suitable equipment for safe access should be provided. Also see GRA059 Working at Height
5.	Gantry areas and scaffolds should have appropriate edge protection and handrails which are inspected regularly.
6.	A method statement should be in place for the type of work being done at height.
7.	Staff (and volunteers) working at height should be trained and competent in the use of access equipment and the working methods to be adopted.
8.	When lighting installation or other work at height is taking place, an exclusion zone should be created underneath and marked with signs, cones and bunting tape.
9.	The safe working load of equipment should be noted and adhered to.
10.	Ceiling bolts, fixings and the associated parts for lighting rigs and scenery should be regularly checked and checks recorded.
11.	Access to stage/gantry and other areas should be restricted at all times.
12.	Stage scenery/access steps should be installed and disassembled by staff trained to do so, where manual handling is required all persons should have received manual handling training.
13.	Scenery, when in use should be secured in place to prevent collapse and this should be checked regularly throughout the period it is in use.
14.	Where trap doors exist they should be coned/ taped off when in use and secured in the down position when not in use.
15.	Where drama is undertaken in multi-use accommodation, such as dining halls, staff must ensure that floor surfaces are adequately checked to ensure spillages or other contamination is not present
16.	Staff must ensure that there is sufficient space for planned activities. Any equipment which is likely to cause an obstruction or impede movement should be removed prior to the activity commencing.
17.	Staff should ensure that pupils are only permitted to undertake drama lessons when suitably dressed. Where activities require "barefoot" work, pupils must not be permitted to wear socks or any footwear.
18.	Where props are to be stored the storage must be of an adequate size and height in order to minimise the likelihood of objects falling.
19.	Where props are in use during lessons or stage productions they should not be left on the floor once discarded.
20.	Where "stage make up" is to be used, staff should ensure they are aware of pupils/students who may suffer from allergies relating to the products to be used.
21.	If props, costumes and scenery are created by staff/pupils/volunteers and substances used are not from school "stock" a risk assessment of the items in question should be undertaken.

- CHILDREN & LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE

GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

22.	Electrical equipment used for drama or school productions should be PAT tested at a frequency determined by risk assessment. Items brought into school for use in school productions must be PAT tested prior to use. See Reference GRA014.
23.	Where "dry ice" or other special effects are to be used in a school production, the hazards and use of such a substance must be communicated to all those present and if necessary control measures put in place. See GRA024.
24.	Fire Extinguishers should be provided in the vicinity of any drama activity or production, but must only be used by trained persons.
25.	During a school production where an audience is present, emergency procedures should be defined in case of the need to evacuate the premises in an emergency. The fire certificate and/or Premises Licence should be consulted for the maximum number of audience permitted.
26.	A risk assessment needs to be completed for performances and this may necessitate the need to alter or complete an additional fire risk assessment for the production.
27.	Accidents must be reported, see GRA001.
28.	Appropriate first aid cover must be provided. See GRA017.
29.	Where high noise levels are created in a drama production, steps should be taken to reduce this level as low as is reasonable (e.g. limiting volume of PA systems). The use of ear defenders for sound engineers/staff should be considered if necessary.

PART D:

Risk rating with controls in place (tick):	Are any control measures in Part C not implemented? (tick):	If yes, state below:	To be audited by:
HIGH			
MEDIUM	YES		
LOW ✓	NO ✓		

PART E:

Frequency of review (tick):	6 Months:	12 Months:	✓	24 Months:
Signature of assessor(s):	(1)			
	(2)			

to gain relevant breathing techniques and also a calm composure which will result in a higher quality voice.

SKILLS AUDIT:

IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY PERSONAL TARGETS OF PROGRESSION I WILL PRODUCE A SKILLS AUDIT. BY IDENTIFYING DIFFERENT SKILLS THAT I WISH TO DEVELOP, AND GIVING MYSELF A MARK OUT OF TEN FOR EACH ONE ON A REGULAR BASIS, I WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP TRACK OF MY IMPROVEMENTS. I WILL PRODUCE ONE BEFORE I START MY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND ONE AFTER TO SHOW THE PROGRESS I HAVE MADE IN MY OPINION.

THE SKILLS I WISH TO DEVELOP ARE:

- Breath control
- Volume projection
- Articulation and diction
- Expression and inflection
- Spatial awareness
- Characterization
- Coordination
- Concentration
- Gesture and facial expression
- Improvisation
- Stage presence
- Clarity of voice
- Teamwork
- Maintaining character

SKILLS AUDIT ONE:

Skill	Positive:	Negative:	Mark
Breath control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I regularly participate in breathing exercises before rehearsals and am constantly improving the technique. • I understand the significance of breath control whilst performing. • I can apply breath control to most of my pieces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes my pace discourages my breath control. 	7/10
Volume projection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can adjust my vocal projection as and where appropriate depending on the tone and style of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am sometimes too loud; I would like to develop this skill more professionally. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • piece and audience. • I can perform with the correct volume easily in any staging area. 		8/10
Articulation and diction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a high understanding of pronunciation. • I adapt to the reading of texts easily no matter how hard the vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is still room for improvement, i sometimes come across words or context which I am unsure of, I believe that more practice and training in this area will develop my skill to a higher ability. 	7/10
Expression and inflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand fully how expression and inflection varies depending on tone and emotion and can often apply this to my character. • Being familiarized with texts contrasting in tone and context has enabled me to gain a wider perspective on this skill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes I can interpret the meaning of some phrases within texts wrongly, and this can lead to confusion over the expression and inflection needed. 	8/10
Spatial awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have had the chance to work in many different staging areas and therefore have a good understanding of special awareness needed in different spaces. • We often participate in special awareness warm ups which have developed my ability greatly over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although I can use this technique fully, sometimes when I get carried away in a performance my special awareness falters. 	8/10
Characterization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have been studying performing arts and drama for a number of years and have been able to develop this technique to a high level over this period of time. • I have a lot of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is always room for improvement in this area. • Characters can be developed in different ways and I would like to encourage myself to 	8/10

	<p>confidence in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can apply appropriate characterization to many different characters offered to me. 	<p>explore characters I play in different ways.</p>	
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exercises and techniques that I participate in during warm ups have improved my coordination greatly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do struggle with this area, my movement on stage is often my lesser capability. 	6/10
Concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My concentration as I have matured and began to take acting more seriously has improved greatly. I can often gain concentration quickly and maintain it through a number of pieces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My concentration falters when I am performing a comedic piece. I can often get distracted by other performers within the same performance. 	6/10
Gesture and facial expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have a high understanding of the gesture and facial expressions needed at different points in a performance and can apply these naturally and effectively. I can display appropriate emotions through these skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I sometimes over think my reactions and this can cause my gesture and facial expressions to be delayed or look 'applied'. 	7/10
Improvisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am beginning to understand the skills needed to create good improvisation. I can react and interact with other people to create short improvisations to some effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I still lack confidence when it comes to improvisation and believe it to be one of my weaker skills that I wish to develop. 	6/10
Stage presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I believe my stage presence is good, my vocal projection, characterization and gestures and facial expressions all add to my ability to create a domineering presence on stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have not yet been exposed to how this skill can be improved; I hope to participate in workshops to develop this skill further. 	7/10

Clarity of voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have good vocal projection and pronunciation which adds to the clarity of my voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My accent often means that some words are muffled. 	7/10
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am confident in most groups of people and like to give my ideas and develop other people's ideas also. • I can motivate a group. • I like to consider everyone's parts when working on a performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can sometimes get frustrated if other people are not giving a input into a performance. 	8/10
Maintaining character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can maintain most characters comfortably within different types of text. • I have good concentration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes my confidence is poor and I can fall out of character. 	8/10

MY THREE CHOSEN PIECES

After much consideration I have chosen to develop acting within my skills unit. I have reached this decision because this is the skill that I wish to persist and maintain after my A levels. It would be incredibly beneficial to develop my acting skills as I will then be able to look into going to a drama school or studying acting at university after I leave sixth form.

To develop my skills I have chosen three contrasting pieces; a monologue, duologue and group piece, varying from comedy to more 'Brechtian' performances.

SKILLS PIECE 1



BERTOLT BRECHT, ST JOAN OF THE
STOCKYARD

THE WORKERS

SKILLS PIECE 2



CHRISTOPHER DURANG'S LAUGHING
WILD

WOMAN

SKILLS PIECE 3



ALAN AYCKBOURN'S - THE
REVENGERS' COMEDIES

KAREN AND HENRY DAVE. SCENE - THE
OPENING OF THE PLAY

SKILLS PIECE 1

BERTOLT BRECHT, ST. JOAN OF THE STOCKYARD

THE WORKERS



SKILLS I WISH TO DEVELOP AND OBTAIN IN THIS PIECE:

- Characterisation
- Coordination
- Confidence
- Articulation/Diction
- Projection
- Gesture/Facial expression
- Communication
- Improvisation
- Stage presence
- Clarity of voice
- Teamwork
- Maintaining character

I will develop and obtain these skills through use of my Skills Development Plan.
To ensure that I stick to my skills development plan and perform to my greatest capabilities I have created an action plan which will help me to focus and give me targets to reach.

Action Plan

The workers

Action	How am I going to do it?	Constraints	Desired outcome
<p>Research the piece</p> <p>Stage 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the techniques of Bertolt Brecht, focusing on his purpose of constructs and of his performances • Research the historical context of working women in 20th century Chicago. • Use the script and internet • Research 'St Joan of the Stockyards' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no videos or recordings of the original performance or previous performances. • There is little information about the play on the internet or in books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain a good knowledge of the piece and why it was created. • To understand the historical context to be able to portray my character's emotions and opinions.
<p>Apply techniques</p> <p>Stage 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disect the piece and have a discussion with Miss Craig and group members; Dan, Danni and lauren to decipher where certain emphasis needs to be added 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have never had to do this before and therefore my lack of experience may constrain us as a group. • I need to be confident enough to put across my ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain some perspective on where the performance is going • To identify the mood/tone of the piece
<p>Learn the lines and rehearse</p> <p>Stage 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearse the piece and set challenges, i.e. to get to the fourth line without the scripts. • By using the time in our lessons to work in the group and focus on the piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The words are quite lengthy and may be hard to remember. • Our group will learn at different paces, making it hard to move on at the same time. • A lot of time needs to be spent on other things. For example; monologues and our other unit of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be able to rehearse the piece without scripts • To be, as a group, confident without the script • To learn all of the words • To develop the character

Rehearsal diaries

Stage one

ACTION: RESEARCH THE PIECE

IN THIS STAGE ALL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WERE ASKED TO DO INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH ON OUR PIECE 'THE WORKERS', ITS WRITER 'BERTOLT BRECHT' AND THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE PIECE 'WORKING WOMEN IN 20TH CENTURY CHICAGO'. I USED THE INTERNET TO DO MY RESEARCH AND GATHERED THE MAJORITY OF MY INFORMATION OF WIKIPEDIA AND OTHER WEBSITES THAT I WAS DIRECTED TO THROUGH GOOGLE. IN THIS SECTION YOU WILL FIND A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF MY RESEARCH AND A NUMBER OF HANDOUTS RELEVANT TO MY RESEARCH.

It is important to research the piece you are performing as this will enable you to understand your character fully. It is particularly important consider their emotions, opinions, state of mind and purpose. Furthermore; it is clear that unless you are fully aware of the historical content of your piece and have researched the practitioners and writers then you cannot portray the character realistically and will not therefore give the audience what was intended by the practitioner/writer.

Also; by being fully aware of the situations, dilemmas and memories your character may have experienced you can begin to relate to, and declare feelings towards your character which can help to give an effective representation.

Bertolt Brecht and 'Epic theatre'



Bertolt Brecht (10th February 1898 – 14th August 1956) was a German poet, playwright and theatre director. He was one of the most influential theatre practitioners of the 20th century. Brecht had no desire to destroy art as an institution; rather, he hoped to 're-function' the theatre to a new social use, his plays challenged political and social views. Brecht is most famous for his influential theory of theatre otherwise known as 'the epic theatre'. Brecht's 'epic theatre' proposed that the audience should not identify emotionally with the characters or the action within the performance and that they should instead enforce rational self-reflection and a critical view of the action on stage.

Brecht thought that regular theatre left the audience too complacent he wanted his audiences to adopt a critical perspective in order to recognise social injustice and exploitation and that they should leave the theatre determined to inflict change in the world outside. To achieve this, Brecht used a number of techniques to remind the audience that the play is *just* a play, that it is a representation of reality and not reality itself. By highlighting the constructed nature of the theatrical event, Brecht hoped to communicate that the audience's reality was changeable.

			<p>accurately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve on all of my skills
<p>Feedback</p> <p>Stage 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a feedback chart Have regular discussion about the group piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have not created a feedback chart until now and so some feedback has been lost. I may not be able to fill out the feedback chart immediately after every performance and therefore some feedback may be slightly inaccurate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have an accurate feedback chart which is filled in regularly To conclude the positive and negative aspects of my individual and group performance.
<p>Dress and technical rehearsal</p> <p>Stage 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat this rehearsal as if it is the actual performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not being prepared for the dress rehearsal, this may include not having an appropriate costume or not having the lighting in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To run through our piece with all costumes and lighting in place
<p>Perform the piece</p> <p>Stage 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not being fully prepared to perform the piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have successfully performed the piece; showcasing my skills development.

To present my program clearly, I have decided to split my rehearsal series into stages. Each activity will count as one stage.

Brechtian Exercises

In our lesson today we attempted a 'Brechtian' exercise. Our teacher gave us a handout and we spent some time doing the exercise the way that Brecht used to ask his actors/actresses to. The handout was of an alienation technique, it was a simple script consisting of two characters A and B, the script also had stage directions.

We were first asked to simply read through the text in pairs, one person taking the role of A and the other of B. After doing this successfully we were asked to read through the text again as before, but this time also reading our own stage directions. This proved to be both humorous and confusing, we couldn't understand how this was meant to help an actor as we were not familiar with Brecht's work.

Eventually we were asked to face our partners and add in actions by following the stage directions as if illustrating the argument, this made us aware of specific actions we had to take but the movements were stiff. Our teacher then asked us to perform the piece with our partners without any dialogue. After some practice our pair began to really focus on the actions and as the piece had to flow the actions began to run into each other and we could really begin to see how this technique can focus your actions and dialogue. We then conjoined into a group of four, this time two people (A and B) would perform the piece, as we had done previously, but whilst the other two members of the group became our narrators/conscience and spoke directly to the audience, overlapping us. We then switched the roles of A and B and the two narrators. Although practicing in that way was confusing, chaotic and at times, hard to take seriously, it certainly gave us as actors/actresses a deeper understanding of the text.

To end the exercise we were asked to get back into our pairs and perform it as if it was a normal text (with actions, dialogue and without saying our stage directions), we found that the piece was a lot more emotive and effective and that we all had a deeper knowledge of the text, and how to perform the text.

On the following page is the handout of the alienation technique exercise which I have attached.



Discussion about Brecht

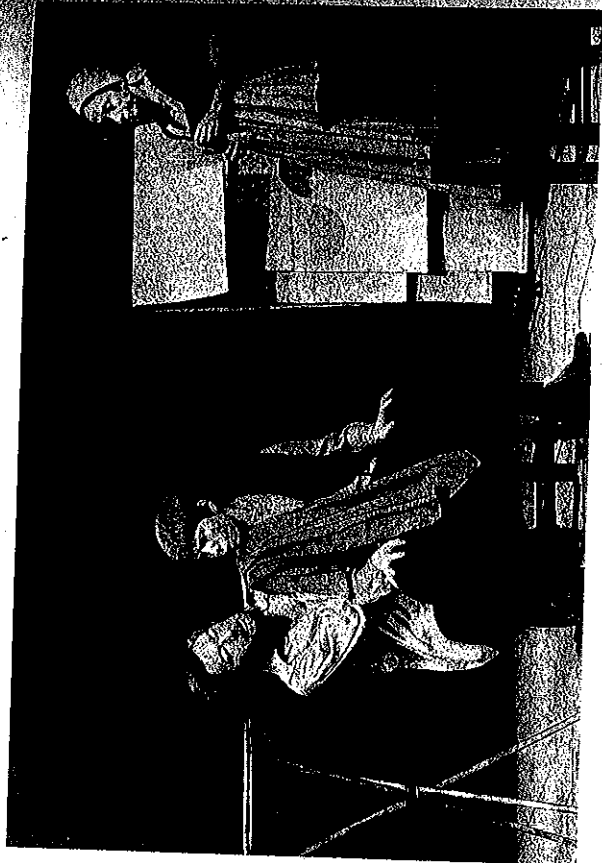
In our lesson today some people in our group approached the teacher as we did not fully understand the practice of Brecht by our own research, our teacher then sat us down as a group and gave us a number of handouts and took the time to read through each one. She focused particularly of the 'epic theatre' and the 'alienation' technique. We also learnt about certain exercises Brecht would get his actors to do and also were familiarized with some important characteristics of his performances for example:

- The way he used placards to tell the audience how to react (such as; clap, shout, laugh)
- How he made his actors/actresses perform more than one character so that the audience didn't become too attached to each character.
- The way Brecht would ensure that all the lights in the performance area were turned on
- His use of songs to disrupt the flow of the plot.
- Costume changes taking place on stage
- Actors/actresses becoming spectators or being on stage out of character during other scenes.

After the lesson I was much more understanding about Brecht and after having a detailed discussion with my peers and other group members I began to understand his techniques and why he used them.

On the following pages I have included the authors handouts that we were given in research the majority of which were discussed in our group discussion in the lesson.

despair, anger) the audience would be purged of these emotions through a process called catharsis. Much British drama demands that kind of audience involvement and response.



A photograph from the 1980 National Theatre production of Brecht's historical play, *Galileo*, about the seventeenth-century scientist. Note the sparse sets, characteristic of productions of Brecht's plays. Notice also the projection at the back of the stage which is clearly not the 'real' Padua.

Bertolt Brecht, *St Joan of the Stockyards*

Brecht has already been mentioned in 1.4. His influence on theatrical practice and theory has been very significant. He put forward the theory of the 'alienation effect': the audience should be denied the luxury of wallowing in emotional sympathies for the characters and their situation. They must use their minds to analyse what is being represented on stage. The actors too must have an 'attitude' to the parts they are playing; they must not lose themselves in the parts. Brecht was a political writer; he believed that theatre could help to change people's view of society.

Below is an extract from *St Joan of the Stockyards* (1959). The action is set in the meat-packing plants of Chicago. The workers at the Lennox packing plant revolt against their working conditions and low wages.

In front of the Lennox Plant, Who they are, why their work is not

THE WORKERS

We are seventy thousand workers in Lennox's packing plant and we

Cannot live a day longer on such low wages.

Yesterday our pay was slashed again

And today the notice is up once more;

ANYONE NOT SATISFIED? * GROWING DISSENTIVE

WITH OUR WAGES CAN GO. * GROWING DISSENTIVE

All right then, let's all go and UP TO BURN.

Shit on the wages that get skinnier every day.

(a silence)

For a long time now this work has made us

sick

The factory our hell and nothing

But cold Chicago's terrors could

Keep us here. But now

By twelve hours' work a man can't even

Earn a stale loaf and

The cheapest pair of pants. Now

A man might just as well go off and

Die like a beast.

(a silence)

What do they take us for? Do they think

We are going to stand here like steers, ready

For anything? Are we

Their chumps? Better lie and rot!

Let's go right now.

(a silence)

It must be six o'clock by now!

Why don't you open up, you sweatshop

bosses? Here

Are your steers, you butchers, open up!

(They knock.)

Maybe they've forgotten us?

(laughter)

Open the gates! We

Want to get into your

Dirt-holes and lousy kitchens

To cook stuffed meat

For the eaters who possess.

(a silence)

We demand at least

Our former wages, even though they were too low, at least
A ten-hour day and at least --
(crossing the stage)
What are you waiting for? Don't you know
That Lennox has shut down?
(NEWSBOYS run across the stage.)
Meat king Lennox forced to shut down his
plants! Seventy thousand workers without
food or shelter! M. L. Lennox a victim of
bitter competitive struggle with Pierpont
Mauler, well-known meat baron and
philanthropist.

THE NEWSBOYS

THE WORKERS

Alas!
Hell itself
Shuts its gate in our faces!
We are doomed. Bloody Mauler grips
Our exploiter by the throat and
We are the ones who choke!

A Street

THE NEWSBOYS

Chicago Tribune, noon edition! P. Mauler,
meat baron and philanthropist, to attend
opening of the P. Mauler Hospitals, largest
and most expensive in the world!
(P. MAULER passes, with two men.)
(to another) That's P. Mauler. Who are the men
walking with him?

A PASSER-BY

THE OTHER

Detectives. They guard him so that he won't
be knocked down.

Comment and activities

Brecht makes the workers speak in unison as a 'chorus' to the audience. There is nothing new about having a chorus - classical Greek drama used one very often. The chorus probably appealed to Brecht because it enables groups of actors to address the audience directly. Choral speaking is not a naturalistic device; Brecht reacted against naturalism. He believed in using theatrical devices and language, but not in the service of lulling an audience into believing in the reality of what was taking place on stage.

Choral speaking

The chorus speaks in verse: the rhythm of the language is clearly very important. First, however, the meaning and emotional content of the text need to be analysed. Strong emotions are expressed in the lines below:

THE WORKERS For a long time now this work has made us
sick

The factory our hell and nothing
But cold Chicago's terrors could
Keep us here.

Words like 'made us sick', 'our hell' and 'cold Chicago's terrors' cannot be spoken neutrally or without emotional conviction by the chorus. The choral speaking must reflect the dramatic situation and the emotions of the workers. This has to be stressed because some choral speaking emphasises clear diction and a 'sing-song' effect at the expense of the meaning of the words. Clear diction is, nevertheless, a very important part of choral speaking on stage.

In addition to emotional conviction, clarity, and speaking in unison, good choral speaking requires variation in pitch, tone, volume and stress. Not all the choruses need be spoken by the entire group - some short sections can be spoken by a group within the chorus, or by individual members.

- ▷ In groups of four or five, discuss how each of the choruses could be delivered. Mark the points in the text where individual words or phrases have to be stressed, the pace of the delivery quickened or slowed, the volume raised or lowered and where a variation of tone could be employed. If one or two voices can deliver a short section rather than the whole chorus, mark those points as well.
- ▷ Having discussed them, rehearse each of the choruses until each group has achieved a satisfactory level of performance.

Acting the scene

- ▷ Now add the other elements of the scene: the knocking at the factory door and the laughter, the passer-by and the newsboys. Act the whole scene.

e.g. the newspanel – is not absolutely vital to a production of the play and the most essential tools directors and actors need are imagination and resourcefulness.

For example, the newspanel can be replaced by two news-anchors on opposite sides of the stage, shouting the latest news, 'Troops in on Dublin crowd.' The music for the show can be recorded. The screen and slides could be replaced by ready-made diagrams that could be whisked on and off stage.

The essence of Theatre Workshop's kind of theatre is improvisation – many of the words actors speak are improvised in rehearsal. Every thing in a Theatre Workshop production has to be conceived in theatrical terms.

Directing 'total theatre'

The director's role in a total theatre production is to integrate the different strands into a coherent theatrical entertainment. However, the theatricality of the show must not swamp the drama as such. Oh *What a Lovely War* is making a serious point about the exploitation of ordinary people. If all the acting versatility, the songs and dances, the razzmatazz, the spectacle and the excitement of the production somehow blot out the dramatic qualities of the piece, then all those theatrical means have been used largely in vain. A director has to keep a tight rein on the proceedings and allow the drama to make its point to an audience.

Acting the scene

▷ To act this scene, you will need some simple props to symbolise, for example, pierrots and national identities. As a group decide how you are going to replace the Newspanel. Choose some suitable music (it need not be the music mentioned in the text).

▷ What kind of acting style are you going to use? These characters are representative figures – you can afford to make them quite 'large'. This show depends on making a direct appeal to an audience. Add ideas of your own about how to communicate the point of the text to an audience.

4.6 Political theatre

The theatre has always had the capacity to deal with contemporary social and political issues. After all, it is a live medium: what happens in social and political life during the day can be turned into drama on stage in the evening. The fringe or alternative theatre often

incorporates into shows and plays references to immediate political topics. Some dramatists are committed to particular political or social beliefs in their plays. These committed dramatists run the danger of writing heavy-handed, polemical plays which leave audiences feeling they have been lectured by the playwright and that he or she has used the stage as a soapbox. On the other hand, however, some audiences seem to like their beliefs and prejudices confirmed for them in the theatre.

This theatrical affirmation of what an audience are already convinced about, occurs in plays of various political hues. Left-wing and right-wing audiences are both equally likely to have their opinions massaged in the theatre.

Dramatists can be politically-committed writers without preaching or being overtly one-sided. For example, they can avoid creating dramatic ciphers either for the characters who represent the views they approve of, or the characters who are the enemies of those ideas. The conflicting protagonists can be equally matched so that the 'good guys' (from the playwright's point of view) do not outdraw the 'bad guys' with such consummate ease that the victory of the 'right' side is perceived as dramatically empty.

Trevor Griffiths, *The Party*

Trevor Griffiths is generally seen as a playwright committed to socialist ideals. His plays, however, are not overtly preaching. His left-wing characters are frequently flawed human beings and their opponents are not portrayed as devils incarnate or stage villains.

Below is an extract from Griffiths' play *The Party* (1973). It consists of part of a dialogue between Tagg, a long-time left-wing activist and a full-time organiser for the Revolutionary Socialist Party, and Joe, a television producer who is a disenchanted socialist. The play is set in 1968, when there was social and political great turmoil in many European countries, particularly in France. A meeting has just ended which has been attended by representatives of various left-wing factions; the meeting has been about the strategy which the revolutionary Left in Britain should take in relation to the current upheavals.

JOE I'm sorry the meeting ... wasn't better.

TAGG It's a start. (Pause. TAGG sinks into himself.)

JOE Don't you have ... doubts?

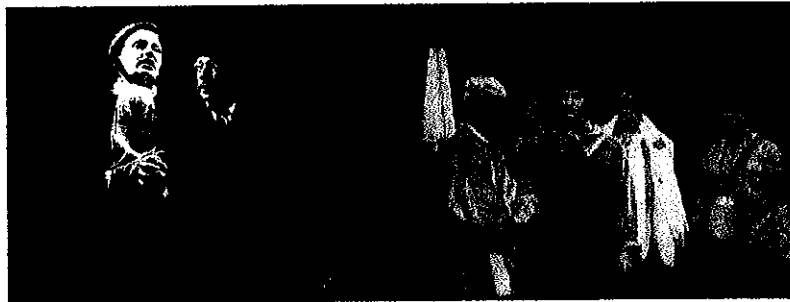
TAGG Doubts?

JOE I've been trying to figure out what makes you different.

St Joan of the Stockyards

INFORMATION FROM:

- www.nytheatre.com
- www.wikipedia.co.uk
- Teacher handouts



GENERAL INFORMATION:

The play 'Saint Joan of the Stockyards' was written by the famous German theatre practitioner Bertolt Brecht, it was originally spoken in German and premiered on the radio on the 30th of April 1959. It is an epic drama and is based around the themes of capitalism and religion. The play is set in Chicago and focuses on the lives of working women in 19th century Chicago.

PLOT SYNOPSIS:

St Joan of the stockyards is another politically and socially challenging piece of theatre written by Brecht. It tells the tale of a young French saint and her faith which in a world where the mysteries of religion have begun to fade, is starting to seem misguided. The play witnesses Joan's struggle in early 19th century factory life, her first collision is with the capitalists who run the stockyards and in particular a scheming mega-tycoon by the name of Mauler, who executes a deal that will advance his position. Although this proves to be an appetising deal for Mauler it is at the same time devastating the lives of the 50,000 workers whose livelihoods are in the stockyards. Enter Joan of the black hats, a Salvation Army type organizer who desperately wants to connect to the workers and therefore finagles a tour of the stockyards. Joan is stunned by the bestiality of the workers that she meets. A worker then offers Joan a position in which she may be able to advance Mauler and when she takes it Joan finds herself amongst the corruption of these types of large institutions and begins to see faults in her own institution 'black hats'.

The moral of the play is that communism is the only way for mankind to proceed fairly; either we all advance together or some of us go far while some of us go nowhere.

CHARACTER LIST:

- Joan Dark, *lieutenant in the Black Straw Hats*
- Pierpont Mauler, *meat king*
- Cridle, *a meat packer*
- Graham, *a meat packer*
- Lennox, *a meat packer*
- Meyers, *a meat packer*
- Slift, *a broker*
- Mrs Luckerniddle
- Gloomb, *a worker*
- Paul Snyder, *major in the Black Straw Hats*
- Martha, *a Black Straw Hat*
- Meat Packers
- Wholesalers
- Stockbreeders
- Brokers
- Speculators
- Black Straw Hats
- Workers
- Labour Leaders
- The Poor
- Detectives
- Newspapermen

- Jackson, a lieutenant in the Black Straw Hats
- Mulberry, a landlord
- A Waiter

- Newsboys
- Soldiers
- Passers-by

Rehearsal diaries

Stage two

ACTION: APPLYING TECHNIQUES TO THE PIECE

IN THIS STAGE WE AS A GROUP, DID A VARIATION OF THINGS TO CONCLUDE WHICH PARTS OF 'THE WORKERS' WE NEEDED TO APPLY TECHNIQUES TO.

Lesson one: Firstly; we all had a group discussion. We were told to each read out 'The workers' individually in front of the group in order to see where we each applied different techniques. Although we all interpreted the text differently there were certain parts of the text that we all had emphasis on. And so we continued the discussion depicting why we were adding emphasis to these parts.

We were then told to read through 'The Workers' together, this made us all follow each other and we ended up stressing certain parts chorally. We also discussed which bits we thought should be spoken chorally and individually and also determined the pace and tone of the piece and the pauses we would include.

Below is an annotated version of 'The Worker's' showing our adaptations:

In front of the Lennox Plant

THE WORKERS

We are seventy thousand workers in Lennox's packing plant and we

Stress 'cannot' → Cannot live a day longer on such low wages. Low is the important word in this sentence and therefore we decided to stress 'low' as if emphasizing how low the wages are.

Yesterday our pay was slashed again

And today the notice is up once more;

Spoken individually by Dan, slight emphasis given to the word 'not'. → ANYONE NOT SATISFIED WITH OUR WAGES CAN GO.

All right then, let's all go and

Emphasis on word 'Shit', again as if spitting at audience. → Shit on the wages that get skinnier every day. Stress on slashed.

(A silence)

For a long time now this work has made us

Sick

The factory our hell and nothing

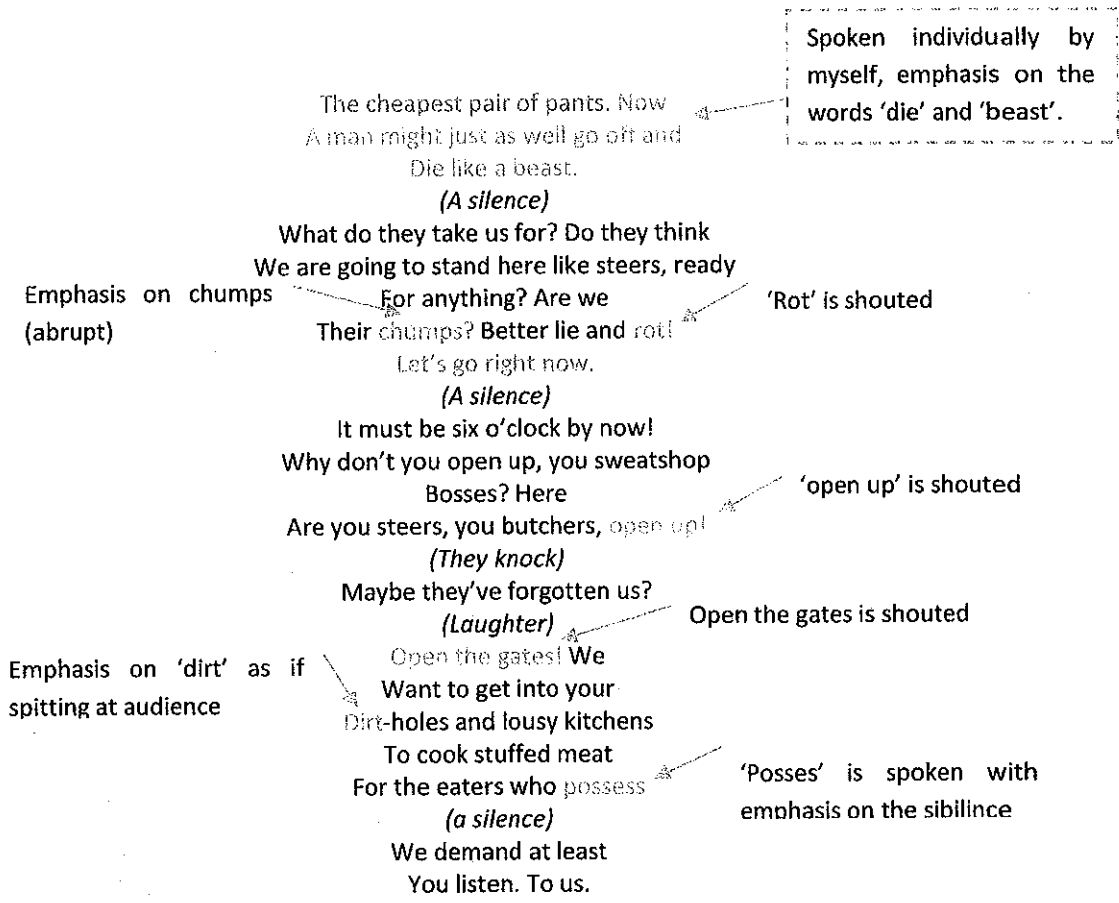
But cold Chicago's terrors could

Spoken individually by Danni, emphasis on the words 'sick' and 'cold' →

Keep us here. But now

Spoken individually by Lauren, stress on words 'stale loaf' and 'pair of pants'. → By twelve hours' work a man can't even

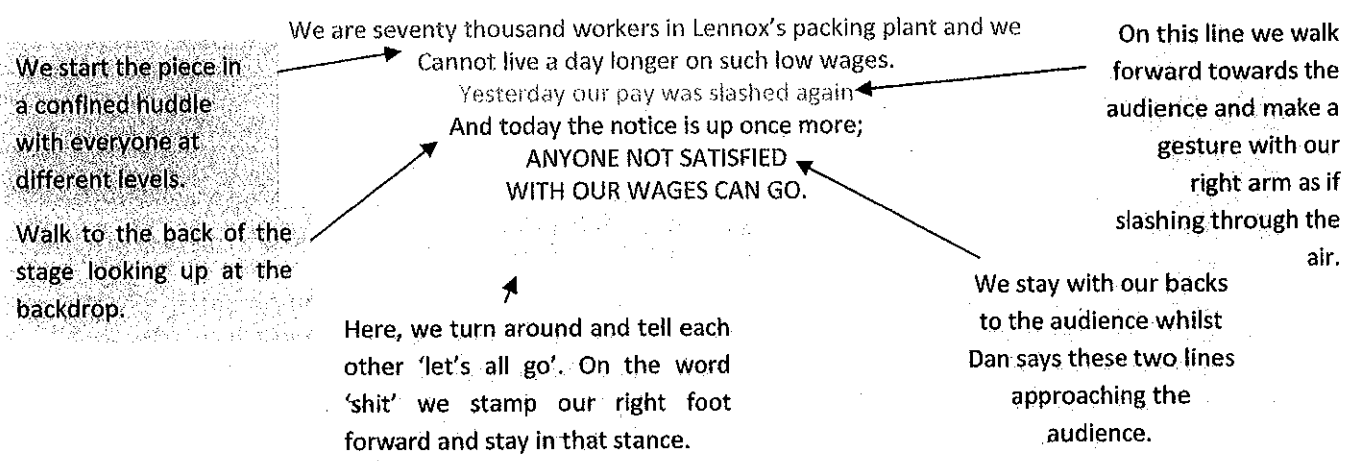
Earn a stale loaf and



Lesson two: Today we have begun to build on the 'The Workers', we have started to add movement to the piece. It is still very new to us and therefore is still in the early stages but by getting us to focus on the actions we were able to add new emotion to the piece. We added simple stage directions and began to alter stances, facial expressions and positioning. Also, by not focusing on the scripts we subconsciously began to remember certain parts of the texts.

Lesson three: In our third lesson today, we again started to add movement, facial expressions and gestures to our group piece 'The Workers', we all contributed our ideas and followed the feedback of our peer Miss Craig.

Lesson four: Today we continued to work on the movement, facial expressions and gestures of 'The Workers', we wanted to really start to portray the anger and oppression of the workers. Below is another annotated extract of 'The Workers' to show the actions we have begun to add to the piece.



almost using Brecht's techniques, adding a surreal and farcical tone to a very political piece of theatre.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage time

LESSON ONE: LEARNING THE LINES AND REHEARSING

ON THIS STAGE WE CONCENTRATED ON LEARNING THE LINES, WE FOUND THAT WE COULD ALL LEARN THEM QUICKER IF WE DONE IT THROUGH REHEARSAL.

Lesson six: Today after participating in a number of warm ups and games; we sat down as a group and focused on learning the lines for our group skills piece. Although 'the workers' is quite challenging to remember due to the amount of complex words we proved that we could learn the lines quite quickly. This was mainly because of the amount of times we had rehearsed it/walked it through before; we had subconsciously begun to remember the words. It also proved efficient that we had already started to break up the text into sections as this gave us blocks of lines to get through at any one time.

We decided to see how many lines we already knew by walking through 'The Workers' without scripts; by doing so we could then see which parts we needed to learn.

Lesson seven: Last lesson we found the advantages of breaking the text into sections, as a group we found that this was the most successful way that we would learn the lines. Therefore, today Mrs Craig introduced us to one of Stanislavski's techniques: 'Units of Action', which required the actor/actress to divide their lines into units. There should be a change in unit if the character is changing their objective, changing setting or event, or also can be a distinct change in tone/mood.

Lesson eight: Today we started the lesson by identifying areas of weakness in the piece after performing it to our teacher. As a group we decided that the following were weak areas:

- The beginning
- The ending
- The gap before "our former wages..."

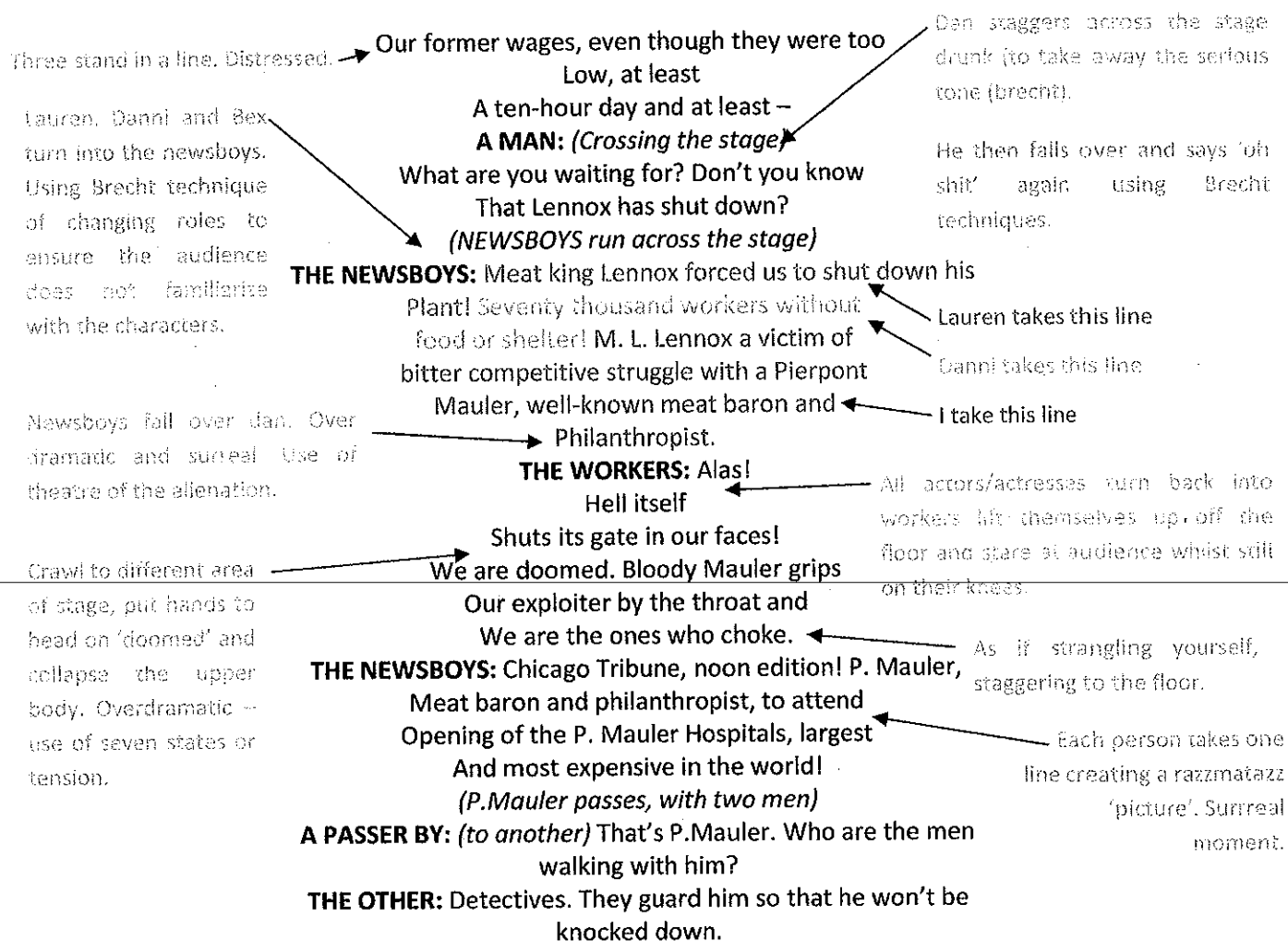
Therefore we started to work on the opening in specific detail. We decided that we didn't like the 'huddle' which we had integrated earlier. We tried a number of different sequences to try and find a powerful opening. We came up with a few ideas such as: Danni, Lauren and I attaining solemn and oppressed poses and Dan walking on whistling and us all talking in a group with the lights slowly coming up but eventually we found an idea that we all felt really positive about.

We liked the idea of the news being thrust upon the constructs, something that was happening to them which was documented, they are not only hearing about the news but they are the news. From this feeling we decided to open the extract by reading a newspaper in a close group on the floor. We felt strongly that there needed to be a moment of realization, almost as if they have realized something incredibly awful is going to happen to them and to share this moment with the audience. We constructed this as follows:

Lesson five: In today's lesson we came to realize that the performance would not be long enough as it was and our teacher was already interested in adding some more to the piece anyway so she decided to introduce us to the following section of the script from St Joan of the Stockyards which was still the workers scene. In a group discussion we decided that we wanted to make the piece more 'Brechtian', and therefore we approached the new part of the script from a new viewpoint.

Firstly; we read through this part of the script and determined who was saying what, where emphasis and stress was, and contributed some ideas as to what we wanted to do. As a group we agreed that the way we had altered the lines of the first section 'we demand at least you listen. To us.' Was effective and so we wanted to keep it as it was. We found that the line which followed 'our former wages' flowed nicely with this adaption.

Below is an annotated version of the part of 'the workers' we were working on today:



Lesson eight: Today we adapted different parts of the piece and ultimately made it a lot stronger.

- We firstly changed the opening. I suggested that we made the opening bizarre, as if we were not aware that the audience was there or just 'hanging around'. We decided that we wanted Dan to walk onto the stage and as he does; the three remaining members of the group huddle with him, as if having a discussion. After a moment, the group comes to realize that the audience is present, they turn into each other and laugh and then perform the opening line with deep emotion to the audience. It is

Rehearsal diaries

Stage four

ACTION: FEEDBACK

AS NOW THAT WE HAVE BEGUN TO PUT THE PERFORMANCE TOGETHER I WILL START TO NOTATE MY FEEDBACK, THIS MAY BE FROM MY TEACHER, OTHER PEERS, FAMILY OR THE GROUP. I WILL DO THIS IN TWO WAYS, THE FIRST WILL BE THROUGH REGULAR GROUP DISCUSSIONS THAT WILL TAKE PLACE DURING LESSON TIME AND THE FINAL WAY WILL BE TO PRODUCE A FEEDBACK CHART. THIS WILL ENABLE ME TO IMPROVE ON MY PERFORMANCE.

I believe that the most efficient way to display my feedback is in a feedback chart, by creating a feedback chart I will be able to go back to it at any time to regain confidence or to recollect how to perform at a certain point in the performance. It will also show how I have improved over the course of the lessons. The feedback chart will include both positive and negative feedback I have received through 'The workers'.

Below is my feedback chart for 'The Workers':

Rehearsal diaries

Stage five

ACTION: DRESS AND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL

BEFORE WE PERFORM OUR GROUP PIECE, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO HAVE A DRESS AND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL TO ENSURE THAT THE LIGHTING, PROPS, AND STAGING ARE ALL CORRECTLY IN PLACE. I WILL HAVE TO DECIDE ON THE PLACE I WISH TO PERFORM MY PIECE, PROPS, COSTUME AND LIGHTING CHANGES I WANT TO APPLY BEFORE PERFORMING MY MONOLOGUE AS ONE OF MY FINAL REHEARSALS.

PERFORMANCE SPACE:

After performing our monologues a few weeks ago, we are fairly sure that we want to perform our group piece in the theatre as this performance space has the least limitations. Also it has the best seating for an audience and is an easy space to film in.

A key feature of the theatre which has influenced this decision, especially with this piece, is that the words are not echoed in there. With all of the choral speaking, spitting of words and

1. I poignantly followed the apparent lines of the paper with my finger.
2. Dan was to disrupt this with a strong and frantic point at something (maybe a photograph) also on the page of the newspaper.
3. We were to react to Dan and then all lean into the paper to look at this photograph.
4. We were then to look up at each other and then back down.
5. And then to slowly bring raise our heads and make eye contact with the audience.

After this we decided that we needed to react with some passion, we wanted to portray the suppressed anger within the characters – the anger and frustration. We also needed to get up off the floor. After some ideas came and passed we decided to get Dan to rip the paper from the floor and try and run off with it whilst Danni, Lauren and I all started to fight over the paper. The paper was to be ripped and teared and scattered all over the floor and when there was no more paper to destroy we were to storm up to the audience and announce the line "we are seventy thousand workers..."

Lesson eight: Today we carried on working with the weaker parts of the text. We had all gained a positive frame of mind after taking the opening to a much higher standard. We now started work on the ending of the piece. We liked the idea of going back to the newspaper article. After a group discussion, we all agreed that the idea of all of us trying desperately to gather the article and stick it back together gave a very strong message of desperation to the audience.

Lesson: After doing some research on the director Stephen Berkoff and in particular his work on 'Salome', thought that it would be great idea to incorporate the slow motion aspect of his work into the commedia d'larte part of our performance (newspaper boys). We began to rehearse this and found it to be very affective.

Lesson: In today's lesson we worked closely with a choreographer to refine the movement in our piece. We also developed the commedia d'larte part of our performance further. We added the following:

- Lauren, Danni and I would pretend to be on a tight-rope and fall over Dan.
- We refined the movement sequence after 'shuts its gates in our faces'.
- We added an entire new section after 'we are the ones who choke'. We firstly adopt a stance whereby we are on our hands and knees and our heads are down. In time with the choral music we lift our heads, nod to the left, nod to the right, to the left and finally to the right. One by one each person finds their way to the back of the stage to deliver there next line. (I have to cartwheel).
- We also changed the ending, after we deliver 'don't you know who we are?', we all stand up with an overpowering stance over Dan, who cowers. As he edges backwards we spit the lines 'we are seventy thousand workers in lennox's packing plant and we cannot live a day longer on such (pause) low (pause) wages!' On the word wages Dan covers his ears and we push him to the floor.

Lesson: Today we all agreed that in one of the next few lessons we would perform our piece, therefore we spent the entire lesson rehearsing the piece, going over parts that we were not entirely comfortable with, and just running the piece beginning to end a number of times, experimenting with the lighting.

Lesson: Today, as well as rehearsing the piece thoroughly, we all sat down and had a group discussion about lighting, costumes and props.

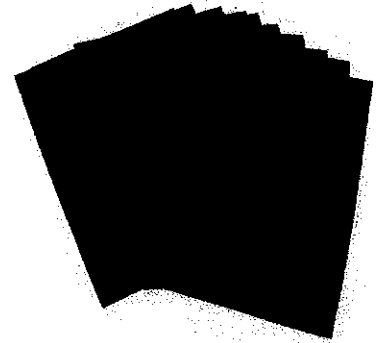
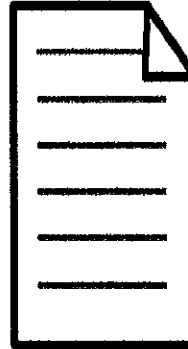
FEEDBACK CHART FOR 'THE WORKERS'

FEEDBACK FROM:	FEEDBACK (POSITIVE/NEGATIVE):	ACTION:
<p>Good</p> <p>1. Miss Craig</p> <p>2. Miss Craig</p> <p>3. Miss Craig</p> <p>4. Amy</p> <p>5. Miss Craig</p>	<p>* Good understanding of expression/inflection.</p> <p>* The words are too shouted</p> <p>* I am providing good ideas within the group and directing them accordingly</p> <p>* The movement at the gates needs to be more abstract and</p> <p>* Communicating well with the audience on solo lines</p>	<p>* Further develop this skill & put it into practice.</p> <p>* work on the skill of varying tone and pitch.</p> <p>* Continue to work with the group to integrate my ideas into the piece.</p> <p>* Further develop characterisation, work closely with amy to achieve the correct effect</p> <p>* further practice my ability to connect with the audience to improve further.</p>
<p>6. Miss Craig</p> <p>7. Amy & Miss Craig</p> <p>8. Beth, Amy & Miss Craig</p> <p>9. Miss Craig, Amy & Beth</p>	<p>* Need to learn all lines to enable us to get off scripts and focus on characterisation.</p> <p>* We do not have a deep enough understanding of the characters. Though characterisation is good it can be further developed</p> <p>* Concentration and Spatial awareness are good for all group members</p> <p>* I have a dominant and effective stage presence</p>	<p>* Learn all of my lines by the next lesson and encourage other group members to do the same.</p> <p>* Research the context of the piece focussing on the emotions of individuals, and apply this to the piece.</p> <p>* Continue to apply this to the piece.</p> <p>* continue to apply techniques to the piece which will further add to my stage presence.</p>

shouting within our piece it would simply not be good enough to film in the drama studio as all of the words would be lost.

PROPS AND COSTUME:

The only prop we require is the paper which we read at the beginning of the piece. Originally we rehearsed with a plain white piece of a3 paper, after some discussion we all decided that we wanted to use a large newspaper.



It was by chance on one rehearsal that the only paper available was a large sheet of black paper, as a group we liked the contrast the colour made, it was quite absurd to be reading off a black sheet and we found that it complimented the piece greatly.

Our costume has been influenced by a picture of the performance we found on an internet search engine. We would like to have:

- White shirts
- Black ties
- Aprons
- White faces
- Black eyes

We strongly believe that this image conveys the desperation and determination of the workers as it is a very strong, physical image.



STAGING:

As there is a lot of movement in the piece we require a simplistic stage, we all agreed to have a clear stage and a black backdrop, this way the focus is on us as actors.

LIGHTING:

The lighting needs to capture the serious and distressing tone to the piece, we want the lighting to make us the focus therefore we want all the house lights off and intimate lighting. We also want to have some red lighting on stage to exaggerate the anger within the characters we are portraying.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage six

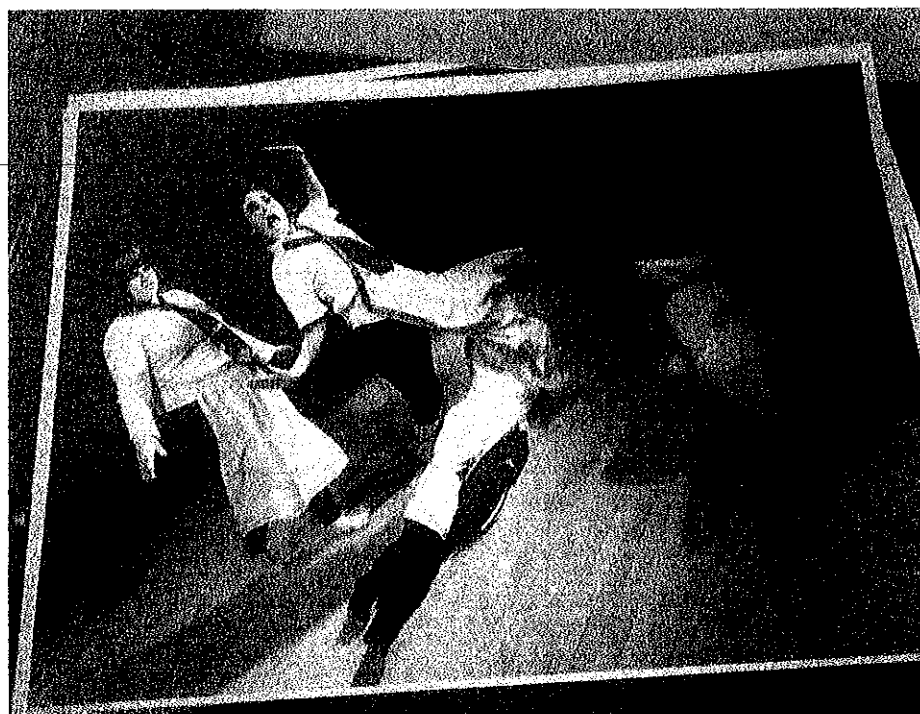
ACTION: PERFORMANCE

THE FINAL STAGE IS TO EVALUATE THE FINAL PERFORMANCE OF THE PIECE, COMMENTING ON FEEDBACK AND THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS WHICH AFFECTED THE PERFORMANCE.

Overall I believe that our performance of 'The Workers' went very well, I was incredibly pleased with the outcome. Every group member managed to recall all of the lines and all of the choreography and movement was performed without fault. Furthermore; we successfully managed to achieve all of the dramatic aims we intended to, which included creating moments of reflection, depression and anger. However; at times our pitch and tone was as if shouting and therefore an improvement would be to have a more varied pitch and tone.

Also, there was a part in the performance after the line 'we are the ones who choke', whereby we have to sing a rhythm and I was out of breath at this point meaning I could not effectively do so – indicating that I need to consider developing my breath control as this would have made the piece better.

PHOTOS



SKILLS PIECE 2

CHRISTOPHER DURANG'S LAUGHING WILD

WOMAN



SKILLS I WISH TO DEVELOP AND OBTAIN IN THIS PIECE:

- Characterisation
- Coordination
- Confidence
- Articulation/Diction
- Projection
- Gesture/Facial expression
- Communication with audience
- Stage presence
- Clarity of voice
- Maintaining character

I will develop and obtain these skills through use of my Skills Development Plan.

To ensure that I stick to my skills development plan and perform to my greatest capabilities I have created an action plan which will help me to focus and give me targets to reach.

Action Plan

The Woman

Action	How am I going to do it?	Constraints	Desired outcome
<p>Research the piece</p> <p>Stage 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the play 'Laughing Wild' • Research the work of Christopher Durang • Research other actors/actresses who have adapted the role of the woman • Use the script and internet 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain a good knowledge of the piece and why it was created. • To understand Christopher Durang's type of work and why he may have wanted to get out of creating the character of the 'Woman'.
<p>Apply techniques</p> <p>Stage 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disect the piece and determine places of emphasis and stress • Disect the piece and determine places of certain movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have never had to do this before and therefore my lack of experience may suffice my ideas. • I need to be confident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain some perspective on where the monologue is going
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enough to put across my ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify the mood/tone of the piece at different times of the piece
<p>Learn the lines and rehearse</p> <p>Stage 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearse the piece and set challenges, i.e. to get to the fourth line without the script. • Through rehearsal add movement, gestures and emphasis to different part of the piece. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The monologue is quite long and so will be hard to remember • There will be no one to interact with and therefore you need to concentrate entirely on your own stage presence. • We have a lot of other lines to learn i.e. for our group piece and unit 3 and it may get 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn the words • To gain in confidence • To develop the character accurately • Create good stage presence • To improve on all

		confusing and overwhelming.	of my skills
Feedback Stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a feedback chart • Have regular discussion about my improvements and ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not created a feedback chart until now and so some feedback has been lost. • I may not be able to fill out the feedback chart immediately after every performance and therefore some feedback may be slightly inaccurate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have an accurate feedback chart which is filled in regularly • To conclude the positive and negative aspects of my individual and group performance.
Dress and technical rehearsal Stage 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat this rehearsal as if it is the actual performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being prepared for the dress rehearsal, this may include not having an appropriate costume or not having the correct props or lighting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To run through our piece with all costumes and lighting and props in place
Performance of the piece Stage 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being fully prepared to perform the piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have successfully performed the piece; showcasing my skills development.

To present my progress clearly, I have decided to split my rehearsal diaries into stages. Each action will count as one stage.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage one

ACTION: RESEARCH THE PIECE

IN THIS STAGE I WILL FULLY RESEARCH MY PIECE TO ENABLE MYSELF TO GIVE AN ACCURATE AND RELEVANT PERFORMANCE OF THE WOMAN. IT IS IMPORTANT TO RESEARCH THE PLAY 'LAUGHING WILD' TO SEE THE CONTEXT OF WHICH MY CHARACTER IS INTRODUCED AND ALSO TO RESEARCH THE WORKS OF CHRISTOPHER DURANG TO FULLY UNDERSTAND WHY HE MAY HAVE CREATED THE CHARACTER OF THE 'WOMAN'. AFTER DOING SO I WILL THEN RESEARCH HOW OTHER ACTORS/ACTRESSES HAVE ADAPTED TO THE ROLE AS THIS WILL GIVE ME SOME IDEAS TO WHERE I WANT TO GO WITH MY ADAPTION.

'Laughing Wild'

'Laughing Wild' was a play written by Christopher Durang in 1987, written for only one actress and one actor it follows the story of two characters, a man and a woman, who are confronting the high anxiety world we live in. It is a short piece which focuses around two monologues; the woman talks about her 'devastating' experience at the supermarket with a man who she hits over the head with a can of tuna fish, the man then gives his version of events; and in conclusion the pair turn out to be having overlapping dreams. 'Laughing Wild' is a highly comical play and is equally outrageous.

The original off-broadway production featured Durang and Katherine Kerr and in the Los Angeles production starred Durang and Jean Smart who were later replaced by Grant Shaud and Christine Ebersole.

Some reviews:

This strange, hilarious three-part play is two monologues and a meeting of two dreamers. ...the dazzling first speech [is] played with breathtaking force by E. Katherine Kerr. The second speech is ...filled with brilliant observations. ... [In Part III] we have entered the woman's dream life, and the man's too. They intersect and mix in crazy patterns. You should see this mad, mad, and quite extraordinary play. It takes the author of... "Sister Mary Ignatius" to new heights of invention. It's his best play so far. It's divine madness.

– Jacques le Sourd, Gannett Westchester Newspapers

Christopher Durang's most deeply felt plays take place at the point where laughter and weeping intersect. The two-character "Laughing Wild" [is] simultaneously hilarious and saddening. ... [E. Katherine] Kerr is quite marvelous... Like Beckett, Durang suggests the impossibility of explaining or assuaging life's absurdity.

– Allan Wallach, Newsday

Mr. Durang is one of the funniest men in the world, able to make the audience laugh time and time again, taking us by surprise with his one-of-a-kind jokes and his relentless bitter satire.

– Edith Oliver, *The New Yorker*

...Durang touches hauntingly and hilariously on the agonies of modern existence, dementia, supermarkets, the ozone layer, and God's alleged interest in the Tony Awards.

– Linda Winer, *Newsday*

Durang is, without doubt, the most talented satirist of his generation. He is also an excellent performer, milking his own boyish personality for all its worth. Jean Smart is equally good, bringing her character to the heights of hysteria and back down again without a hitch. ...there are more than enough ideas and hilarity to make "Laughing Wild" one of the best evenings of theatre Los Angeles has seen in a long while.

– Jeff Schwager, *Village View* (on the 1990 LA production)

Grand satire... savagely, consistently on target...

– L.A. Times

Christopher Durang

Christopher Durang is an American playwright and actor who was born on January 2nd 1949. He was best known for his 'outrageous' and 'absurd' comedy and his work was most popular in the 80's. His plays have been performed on and off Broadway, around America and abroad, with his most famous play being 'Laughing Wild'.



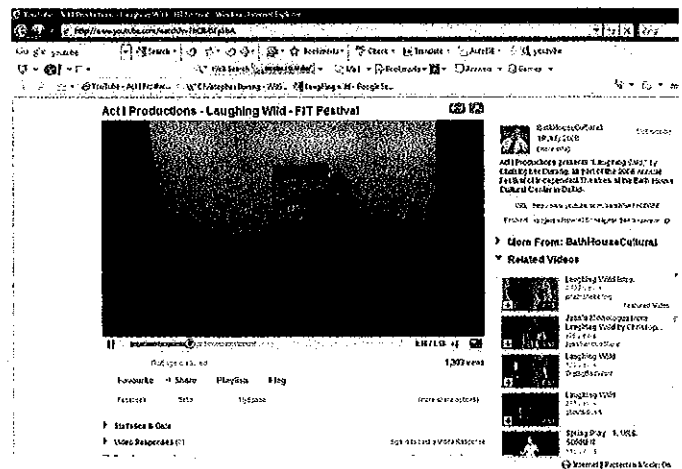
Amongst his works Christopher Durang has written 1,455 one one act plays; Durang's work also includes: *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You*, *Beyond Therapy*, *Baby With the Bathwater*, *The Nature and Purpose of the Universe*, *Titanic*, *A History of the American Film*, *The Idiots Karamazov*, *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, *Laughing Wild*, *'Dentity Crisis*, *The Actor's Nightmare*, *The Vietnamization of New Jersey*, *Betty's Summer Vacation*, *Adrift in Macao*, *Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge*, *Miss Witherspoon*, *Why Torture is Wrong*, and *the People Who Love Them*, and a collection of one-act parodies meant to be performed in one evening entitled *Durang/Durang* that includes "Mrs. Sorken", "For Whom The Southern Belle Tolls" (a parody of *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams), "A Sty of the Eye", "Nina in the Morning", "Wanda's Visit", and "Business Lunch at the Russian Tea Room".

Durang's works were a new, unique form of comedy performance which were all well received everywhere and still performed today. His genius led him to win a number of Obie Awards for *Sister Mary Ignatius*, *The Marriage of Bette and Boo* and *Betty's Summer Vacation*. He received a nomination for a Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical for *A History of the American Film*. Durang has been awarded numerous fellowships and high profile grants including a Guggenheim, a Rockefeller, the CBS Playwriting Fellowship, the Lecomte du Nouy Foundation grant, and the Kenyon Festival Theatre Playwriting Prize. He was also a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama in 2006 for *Miss Witherspoon*.

Other Actors/Actresses Interpretations

Through use of 'www.youtube.co.uk' I found a short recoding of the tuna fish scene from 'Laughing Wild' which was performed at the Annual Festival of Independent Theatres at the Bath House Cultural Center in Dallas in 2008. As this was a modern adaption i wanted to see how the actress portrayed the character of the woman in a way which would relate to the audience. Unfortunately; the website did not say who the actress was and the extract was performed as a play rather than a monologue. However; I liked the frustration she built into the character and the sense of urgency or carelessness, it's almost

as if she has lost all of her morals and I definitely want this to come across in my adaption.



I then found another adaption to the character, which was again on 'www.youtube.co.uk', it was a young actress called Kristen Lynne. Her performance was very different to any other adaption i had seen previously. Instead of being totally outrageous it was much more natural and realistic. She split the recording into several parts and told the story as she was getting ready, at one point she is even in the shower, behind the curtain reciting the monologue.

Although i want to reinforce the outrageousness that Christopher Durang portrayed throughout all of his plays I also like the tone of Kristen Lynne's adaption at times too, after watching her performance I definitely think it is important that although outrageous, the character of the 'Woman' needs to be believable.

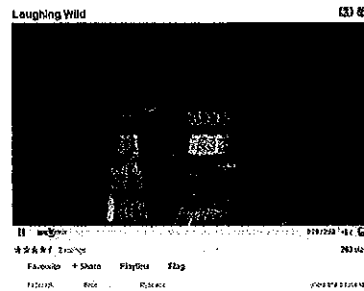
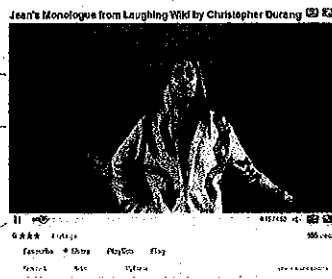


I also watched a number of other interpretations:

You need to be extremely confident when playing the part.

Some movement and exaggerated gestures are needed to create good stage presence

The tension within the character needs to build up until it is released at the end.



Props work well in this piece

Over exaggerated facial expression and gestures add to the comedy of the piece.

More effective as a monologue than a duologue.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage two

ACTION. APPLYING TECHNIQUES TO THE PIECE

IN THIS STAGE I WILL HAVE TO APPLY TECHNIQUES TO MY MONOLOGUE. THIS IS AN ONGOING PROCESS AND WILL THEREFORE WILL BE COMPLETED OVER A NUMBER OF LESSONS. I HAVE MANY IDEAS OF MY OWN, SOME OF WHICH I HAVE INITIATED FROM RESEARCHING OTHER ACTORS/ACTRESSES ADAPTION'S.

Lesson one: In my first lesson I read through my monologue from 'Laughing Wild' a number of times, in the process I discovered that the first thing I would need to do is decide the length of my monologue. After confronting my teacher about this issue she told me that my monologue should be 2-3 minutes in length, closer to three. This gave me a good perspective on the length that my performance needed to be. I personally felt that it was incredibly important to have a distinct and good ending to the piece, so with these two issues in mind I read through the monologue again and began to highlight possible ending points. While doing so, my teacher advised me that students she had previously worked with had ended the monologue after 'I need to be surrounded with culture right now, not tuna fish.' so I added this to the possibilities. I read through the monologue again and I found that it felt very short. I also found that there were a number of possible endings in the following paragraph. Below is an extract from an annotated script showing the ending points highlighted:

...And the person fell to the ground, and looked totally startled, and some child nearby started to cry, and I was still crying, and I couldn't imagine making use of the tuna fish now anyway, and so I shouted at the kid to stop crying – I mean, it was drawing too much attention to me – and I ran out of the supermarket, and I thought, I'll take a taxi to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I need to be surrounded with culture right now, not tuna fish.

But you know how hard it is to hail a taxi. I waved my hand, and then this terrible man who came to the street after I was there waved his hand, and the taxi stopped for him because he saw him first, and the injustice of it made my eyes start to well with tears again. So I lost that taxi. So I raised my hand again, and the next three taxis were already full, although one of them still had his "free" light on which made me angry, because if he had had it off, I probably wouldn't have raised my arm, which was getting tired now, I think hitting the man with the tuna fish used some muscles I wasn't used to using. And then this other taxi started to get near, and this woman with groceries came out, and she started to hail it and I went right over to her and I shouted smack into her ear: "If you take this taxi from me, I will kill you!" And she looked really startled, and then the taxi stopped, and I got in, and I said I want to go cross-town to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I must have culture and quiet, and things of value around me I have had a terrible time in the supermarket. And then the taxi driver, who was Greek or Muslim or Armenian or something, said to me, I have to downtown now, I'm about to get off work...

It would be good to end at this point as it is where the anger of the 'woman' is heightened, it would also make a comical ending. However, the ending would be abrupt. It doesn't seem to be the end of anything.

This would be a good point to end as it can be seen as a definitive ending sentence, it is almost a conclusion to the 'Woman's' ranting, however, this will shorten the monologue severely and as a result may not be long enough.

It would be good to end with a link back to the supermarket as this would make the audience reflect on the past events.

The ending of this paragraph is a sensible place to end as it concludes this section of the monologue, links back on past events and exaggerates the woman's 'unlucky' day and desperate attempt to get to some 'culture' which is what the monologue is all about.

At the end of this lesson I came to the decision to end on the phrase 'I'm about to get off work', however, after performing the monologue in comparison to the others in my class it felt too long. Therefore, I have decided to end at 'I need to be surrounded by culture right now, not tuna fish'.

Lesson two: In this lesson I again used Stanislavski's 'Units of Action' to break down my text. On the following page please find my 'Laughing Wild' script with these units shown clearly:

LAUGHING WILD

I. LAUGHING WILD

SCENE

A Woman enters and addresses the audience.

She should be dressed fairly normally. She sits in a chair and talks to the audience. She can get up from the chair from time to time if the spirit moves her.

The backdrop behind her should be nondescript—pretty much a limbo setting.

WOMAN. Oh, it's all such a mess. Look at this mess. My hair is a mess. My clothes are a mess.

I want to talk to you about life. It's just too difficult to be alive, isn't it, and to try to function? There are all these people to deal with. I tried to buy a can of tuna fish in the supermarket, and there was this person standing right in front of where I wanted to reach out to get the tuna fish, and I waited a while, to see if they'd move, and they didn't—they were looking at tuna fish too, but they were taking a real long time on it, reading the ingredients on each can like they were a book, a pretty boring book, if you ask me, but nobody has, so I waited a long while, and they didn't move, and I couldn't get to the tuna fish cans, and I thought about asking them to move, but then they seemed so stupid not to have sensed that I needed to get by them that I had this awful fear that it would do no good, no good at all, to ask them—they'd probably say something like "Well, move when we're goddam ready," your nagging

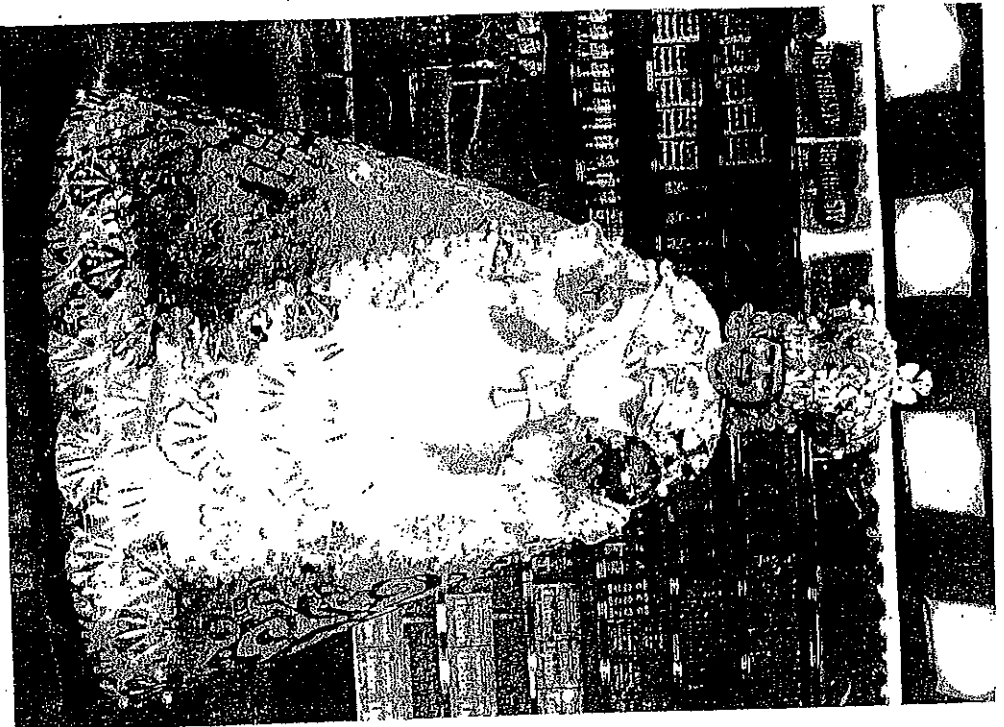


Photo © Copyright, 1988, by Gerry Goodstein
Christopher Durang as the "Infant of Prague" in a scene from the New York production of "Laughing Wild." Costume design by William Ivey Long. Set design by Thomas Lynch.

bitch," and then what would I do? And so then I started to cry out of frustration, quietly, so as not to disturb anyone, and still, even though I was softly sobbing, this stupid person didn't grasp that I needed to get by the meter, reach the goddam tuna fish, people are so insensitive, I just hate them, and so I reached over with my fist, and I brought it down real hard on his head and I screamed: "Would you kindly, move, asshole!"

And the person fell to the ground, and looked totally startled, and some ~~other~~ nearby started to cry, and I was still crying, and I couldn't imagine making use of the tuna fish now anyway, and so I shouted at the child to stop crying — I mean, it was drawing too much attention to me — and I ran out of the supermarket, and I thought, I'll take a taxi to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I need to be surrounded with culture right now, not tuna fish.

But you know how hard it is to hail a taxi. I waved my hand, and then this terrible man who came to the street after I was there waved his hand, and the taxi stopped for him because he saw him first, and the injustice of it made my eyes start to well with tears again. So I lost that taxi. So I raised my hand again, and the next *three* taxis were already full, although one of them still had his "free" light on which made me angry, because if he had had it off, I probably wouldn't have raised my arm, which was getting tired now, I think hitting the man with the tuna fish used some muscles I wasn't used to using. And then this other taxi started to get near, and this woman with groceries came out, and she started to hail it and I went right over to her and I shouted smack into her ear: "If you take this taxi from me, I will kill you!" And she looked really startled, and then the taxi stopped, and I got in, and I said, I want to go cross-town to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I must have culture, and quiet, and things of value around me, I have had a terrible time in the supermarket. And then the taxi driver, who was Greek or Muslim or Armenian or something, said to me, I have to go downtown now, I'm about to get off work.

Well, I thought my head would explode. I mean, was his taxi available, or wasn't it? And wasn't it *low* that they can't refuse you, even if you want to go to Staten Island? But I just couldn't bear the thought of pressing charges against this man — it would take days and days of phone calls, and meetings, and letters, and all because he wouldn't bring me to the goddam Metropolitan. So I sat in his taxi and I wouldn't move. I thought for a while about going back and following through on my initial impulse to buy a can of tuna fish — tuna fish, mixed with mayonnaise, is one of the few things I can make in the kitchen — but then I realized that probably whoever was at the cash register would give me difficulties, probably because I was a woman, or because she was a woman, or maybe it was a man who hated women, or wished he was a woman — anyway it all started to seem far too complicated; so I thought, I'll just stay in this taxi cab, and I'll be damned if I get out. And he kept saying, "Lady, please, I have to get home to my family." And I said "Where? In Staten Island?"

And then I thought, I won't even argue, I'll just sit here. And he started to shout at me, obscenities and so-on, and I thought, well, at least I'm sitting down; maybe eventually he'll decide it's easier just to drive me to the Metropolitan, although I started to think maybe I didn't want to go there anyway, I was hungry, for starters, maybe a movie with popcorn and diet Coke and those chocolate-covered ice-cream balls, what are they called — they're delicious, and they cost about \$2.50 in the movie theatre, which is ridiculously expensive, but then what movie would I see; and then all of a sudden he pulled his cab out into traffic in a great big hurry, it made me sort of lurch in my seat, and I yelled out, "I've changed my mind, I want to see a movie;" and before I could ask him for recommendations, he said he was taking me to the police station, and I thought, yes, but isn't he in the wrong, refusing a fare? But then you know the stories you've read about police brutality and all, maybe they'd have one of those electrical devices, and they'd shock me even though I wasn't Puerto Rican — well, whatever, I didn't think going to the police was worth it as a

AS SHOWN ON THE SCRIPT, I DECIDED THAT MY SCRIPT HAD FIVE DEFINITIVE UNITS; BELOW ARE MY REASONING FOR THESE UNITS:

UNIT 1:

I decided to place these lines in unit one, as these seven sentences focus around introducing the character of the 'woman' to the audience and discusses the context of the monologue. It is almost a prologue to the piece, allowing her to enter the stage portraying her suppressed anger which is soon to be released; it introduces her frustration towards her life and other people.

UNIT 2:

I thought it was suitable to place these lines together as the character is recollecting an event. These lines focus around an incident with a man in the supermarket and the can of 'tuna fish'. Within these lines the character's anger builds, I decided to end unit two at 'then what would I do?' because her anger is heightened and after this her mood is changed.

UNIT 3:

The 'woman's' objective within unit three is to explain how and why she managed to start crying and the effects of this reaction. I thought that these lines should be placed together as it is where her emotional state is at its most outrageous and chaotic.

UNIT 4:

The 'woman's' objective within unit three is to explain how and why she managed to start crying and the effects of this reaction. I thought that these lines should be placed together as it is where her emotional state is at its most outrageous and chaotic.

UNIT 5:

In the last unit my character's objective is to explain the events which led her to leave the supermarket. Within the unit she is incredibly distraught and chaotic and it is most definitely the climax of her experience at the supermarket.

Lesson three: Within today's lesson, we managed to work on specific areas of our monologues in close connection with our teacher. Please find below an annotated script with the ideas we interpreted today:

Struggling with umbrella, throw it down on chair

Struggling to undo buttons on coat.

Struggling to take coat off

Overuse of hands

Very loud and aggressive

Woman: I want to talk to you about life. It's just too difficult to be alive, isn't it, and try to function? There are all these people to deal with. I tried to buy a can of tuna fish in the supermarket, and there was this person standing right in front of where I wanted to reach out to get the tuna fish, and I waited a while, to see if they'd move, and they didn't—they were looking at tuna fish too, but they were taking a real long time on it, reading the ingredients on each can like they were a book, a pretty boring book if you ask me, but nobody has, so I waited a long while, and they didn't move, and I couldn't get to the tuna fish cans, and I thought about asking them to move, but then they seemed so stupid not to have sensed that I needed to get by them that I had this awful fear that it would do no good, no good at all, to ask them, they'd probably say something like, "We'll move when we're god dam ready you nagging bitch" and then what would I do?

Sit down on chair

Long pause

Over accentuate words

Pacing

Long pause

Rehearsal diaries

Page three

ACTION: LEARNING THE LINES AND REHEARSING

IN THIS STAGE I CONCENTRATED ON LEARNING THE LINES, THIS PROVED TO BE MUCH EASIER AFTER USING THE 'BLOCKING' TECHNIQUE. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO REHEARSE OUR MONOLOGUES AS MUCH AS WE CAN TO GAIN THE COURAGE AND COMFORT OF PERFORMING ALONE.

Lesson four: Today's lesson was the first lesson where we were to work on our individual monologues. I particularly found this hard, this was mainly due to my lack in confidence and I am overwhelmed by the different aspects of the character I need to develop and am finding it challenging to do so.

As we haven't worked on the monologues before; today our teacher made us recite them with different expression, focusing on different words just to get us more familiarized with the our pieces. I struggled particularly with the accent of my character as she is American – I can already see that this is an aspect of performance which I will have to rehearse and practice.

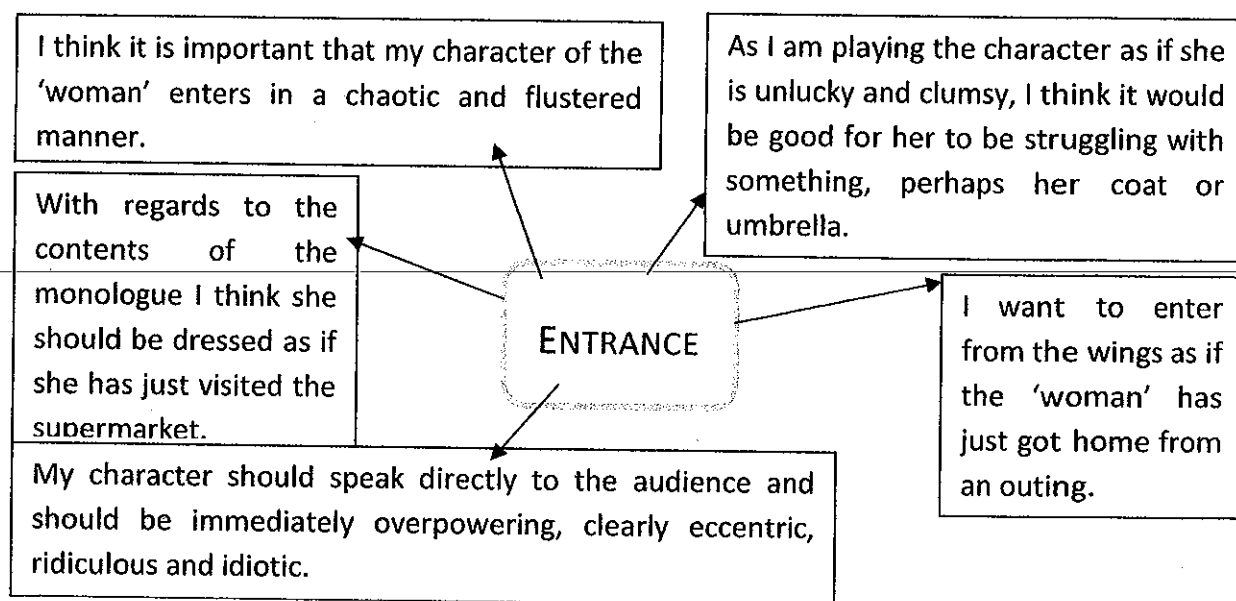
Towards the end of the lesson we all had to perform it to each other and again, I struggled with this. I believe that it is because I am not yet comfortable with the character or script. We recorded some footage on the video camera to show the early stages of our work.

Lesson five: In today's lesson our teacher was adamant that we focused on learning the lines as we all agreed we would be able to do more with our pieces once we were not restricted with the script. We all sat down together and recited as much as we could without the script. I managed to get to the end of the second unit. And whilst Dan, Danni and Lauren were reciting their pieces Mrs Craig gave us a new section to focus on, and we then had to recite that part. And so on and so on. Eventually we all got to the end of our pieces.

It was the next part of the lesson which made me feel as though I was improving and gaining confidence, we all faced different walls in the room and recited the monologues. This was challenging at first because it was hard to focus with everyone else doing it at the same time but it was a very good way to get us to focus and it also helped with our confidence as we knew other people were working on theirs also. We then took it in turns to perform to the video-camera reciting as much as we could and applying some expression and accent.

Lesson six: Today we repeated the exercise whereby we had to all stand in a tight group competing with each other to dominate the group by reciting the monologues.

After this, we started to work on our entrances and exits. Our teacher gave us a period of time to create an entrance using the first two sentences of our monologues. To start, I made a mind map of the things I could include in my opening:



I then began to put these ideas into practice.

Lesson seven: Today we had our lesson in the theatre so that we could be exposed to the stage where we would eventually be performing our monologues. After participating in a 'seven states of tension' exercise, we all placed a chair facing the audience and firstly recited our monologues all at the same time, this got us used to our performance space and also forced us to concentrate on our own words.

After this, our teacher invited a small drama class from the year below us to be an audience and we were put on the spot to recite our monologues. Although it was slightly

nerve-racking, it certainly made us aware of areas we needed to work on (such as pace) and also made me personally be pleased with what I had achieved so far.

Lesson eight: Today, our teacher informed us that we will be performing and recording our monologues in the next lesson, therefore, time was spent rehearsing our monologues repetitively from beginning to end.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage four

ACTION: FEEDBACK

IT IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT TO TAKE ALL FEEDBACK INTO CONSIDERATION, IT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT BECAUSE I AM WORKING ALONE. I WILL TAKE IN MY FEEDBACK IN TWO WAYS, THE FIRST WILL BE THROUGH REGULAR GROUP DISCUSSIONS THAT WILL TAKE PLACE DURING LESSON TIME AND THE FINAL WAY WILL BE TO PRODUCE A FEEDBACK CHART. THIS WILL ENABLE ME TO IMPROVE ON MY PERFORMANCE.

By creating a feedback chart I will be fully aware of the positive and negative aspects of my performance. It will also show how I have improved over the course of the lessons. The feedback chart will show the majority of feedback I have been given by my fellow pupils and peers whilst working on my monologue from *Laughing Wild*.

Please find on the next page my feedback chart for the 'Woman' in Christopher Durang's *Laughing Wild*:

FEEDBACK CHART FOR 'LAUGHING WILD'

FEEDBACK FROM:	FEEDBACK (POSITIVE/NEGATIVE):	ACTION:
1. Miss Craig, other group members.	* I need to work immensely on my confidence as it is lacking.	* Research techniques to develop confidence & put into practice.
2. Miss Craig.	* Develop accent	* Research American accent and put this into practice
3. Amy & Miss Craig.	* facial expressions and gestures are good and provide the humour interbed within the piece	* continue to develop characterisation
4. Miss Craig	* I have created a relevant and effective stage presence.	* Continue to develop characterisation, expression and gestures to further improve my stage presence
5. Miss Craig & other group members	* work on confidence	* continue research & take part in confidence exercises.
6. Miss Craig	* I have maintained a good pitch and tone, which varies accordingly.	* continue to take part in exercises & techniques which will help me to improve further.
7. Amy & Miss Craig	* Make gestures more 'over the top' and manic	* Research 'manic' character take part in exercises.
8. Other group members	* Good communication with the audience	* Practice piece further so this connection can be stronger.
9. Miss Craig & other group members.	* facial expressions are incredibly effective.	* continue to apply this to the piece.
10. Miss Craig & year 11 GCSE performing arts candidates	* The accent I apply is believable, well maintained and effective.	* Keep practicing the accent so that the develop isn't lost.
11. Year 11 GCSE P.A class	* Good & effective use of dramatic pauses	* continue to apply this to the piece.
12. Miss Craig.	* Confidence has improved greatly.	* further develop this skill to ensure further progression

Rehearsal diaries

Stage five

DAY 17: DRESS AND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL

BEFORE I FINALLY PERFORM MY MONOLOGUE IT IS ESSENTIAL TO HAVE A DRESS AND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL TO ENSURE THAT THE LIGHTING, PROPS, AND STAGING ARE ALL CORRECTLY IN PLACE. I WILL HAVE TO DECIDE ON THE PLACE I WISH TO PERFORM MY PIECE, PROPS AND LIGHTING CHANGES I WANT TO APPLY BEFORE PERFORMING MY MONOLOGUE AS ONE OF MY FINAL REHEARSALS.

PERFORMANCE SPACE:

With regards to performance space there were two main areas where I could possibly perform my monologue, all being within the school as this was the easiest place for me and my teacher to access. Also; I had thoroughly rehearsed my monologue in these places many times before, so the stages were familiar.

1. THE THEATRE

Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audience seating area• Professional lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large stage area• Light and airy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projection screen• Curtains and backdrop	

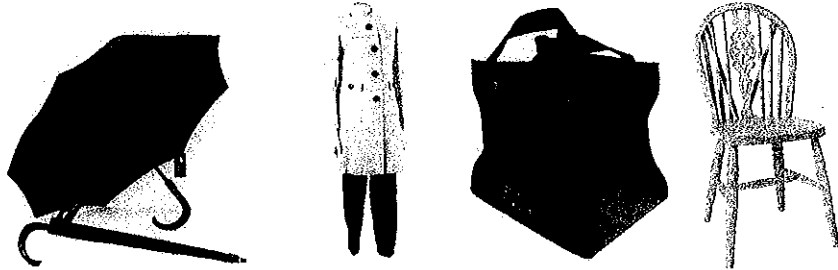
2. THE DRAMA STUDIO

Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audience seating area• Professional lighting• Projection screen• Curtains and backdrop• Intimate staging area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words are muffled due to echo

After a discussion with my teacher and several rehearsals in both areas, I came to the decision that I would prefer to film my monologue in the drama studio. Although both areas offered the essentials I needed such as: a projection screen and lighting, it was the intimacy of the studio that I preferred as a solo performer. I found that my performance looked more compact in a darker, smaller place than in the light and airy theatre. Also; the projection was much more poignant being on a black backdrop.

PROPS AND COSTUME:

As my character of 'the woman' is a very hectic, manic character, I don't want to overcomplicate the piece by using too many props, as most of the focus will be on the overpowering dialogue I deliver.



In a lesson previously; I decided that I wanted the audience to understand that my character was arriving home after encountering an event which has clearly flustered her, and that I would show this by her 'struggle' with everyday items. Therefore I have decided to incorporate the use of a coat, an umbrella and a bag, all of which are everyday items.

With regards to staging I think that a single stool will be appropriate from which my character can sit and stand when and where I think is necessary.

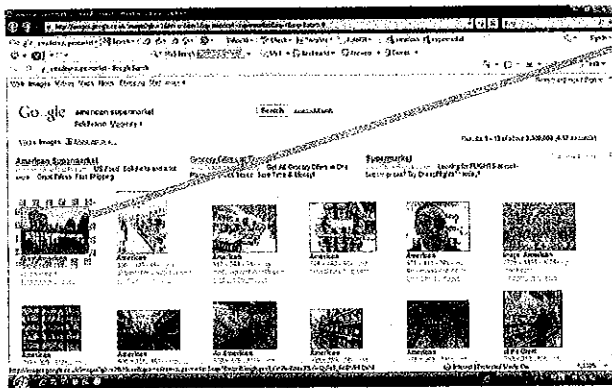
PROJECTION:

There were a number of things that I was considering to use as my background image for my monologue, I soon narrowed this down to three choices:

- American supermarket
- Living room
- Tuna fish can

After much consideration I decided to go with the American supermarket as I thought this was the most relevant to the context of the piece.

I researched some images of American supermarkets using the search engine 'google' and soon found an image I liked, as it was taken from outside giving the impression it was late, almost as if my character had been there all day long.



Health and Safety

No socks – slipping hazard

No jewellery – may get caught and cause injury

Hair up – may get caught and cause injury

Suitable clothing = must be loose fitting, not too long on the leg, – gives full flexibility to body and not create falling hazard.

Room temperature must be approx 23°C so body does not over heat or become cold.

The ceiling must be high enough so does not create a hazard if people are jumping.

The floor space must be clear so there is no tripping hazard and the space must be big enough to accommodate everyone comfortably.

A physical warm-up must take place at the beginning so they are mentally prepared and will not injure there bodies.

There must be a first aid box to hand at any time and someone who can perform emergency first aid if necessary.

There must be easy access to fire escapes which should never be locked or blocked.

Everyone should drink plenty of water so they do not dehydrate.

Everyone must be aware of where props and scenery is so there is not a tripping hazard.

LIGHTING:

To create a homely atmosphere I want the lighting to be fairly normal, possibly a floodlight stage or simply with the houselights on.

DRESS REHEARSAL

We did the dress rehearsal in front of two year 11 drama classes; there were both positive and negative aspects which influenced a number of final decisions to be made. For example; the lighting that I wanted 'all house lights on' proved to be ineffective, therefore we decided to change this to a slightly red floodlight stage.

On the other hand, the props and costumes added a new dimension to the piece and created my intentions adequately. I also recalled all the lines as intended, developed good progress in skills and was pleased with my final rehearsal overall, considering it to be close to finished.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage wk

ACTION: PERFORMANCE

THE FINAL STAGE IS TO EVALUATE THE FINAL PERFORMANCE OF THE PIECE, COMMENTING ON FEEDBACK AND THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS WHICH AFFECTED THE PERFORMANCE.

I was pleased with my performance of 'The Woman', I managed to interpret all the emotions which the piece required and successfully displayed the characterisation techniques I had been working on in rehearsals. Furthermore; I delivered all my lines without fault and gave the piece a relevant pace, I was particularly pleased with this as I have previously applied a pace which was too fast. Also, I believe that I had good communication with the audience throughout, especially at the parts when I applied dramatic pauses to insinuate the character of the woman waiting.

I think that my characterization and facial expression were the strongest aspects of the piece.

As the piece is still working progress I did not have the correct costume and props on, although the things I used were adequate I would have preferred to develop this further as it would have added more comedy to the piece. Also; I think that my coordination could have been better, as at times within the performance I over use hand gestures making the piece less believable.

As a result I will continue to develop the skill of coordination and will be wary of my gestures, as this would have improved the piece.

SKILLS PIECE 3

ALAN AYCKBOURN'S - THE REVENGERS' COMEDIES

KAREN AND HENRY DUOLOGUE – THE OPENING OF THE PLAY



SKILLS I WISH TO DEVELOP AND OBTAIN IN THIS PIECE:

- Characterisation
- Coordination
- Confidence
- Articulation/Diction
- Projection
- Gesture/Facial expression
- Communication
- Improvisation
- Stage presence
- Clarity of voice
- Maintaining character

I will develop and obtain these skills through use of my Skills Development Plan.

To ensure that I stick to my skills development plan and perform to my greatest capabilities I have created an action plan which will help me to focus and give me targets to reach.

Action Plan

KAREN AND HENRY DUOLOGUE – THE OPENING OF THE PLAY

Action	How am I going to do it?	Constraints	Desired outcome
<p>Research the piece</p> <p>Stage 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the play 'The Revengers' Comedies • Research the work of Alan Ayckbourn • Research other actresses who have developed the role of 'Karen'. • Use the script and internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be hard to find specific information on the section we are doing because it is such a small section of the play itself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain a good knowledge of the piece and why it was created. • To understand what Alan Ayckbourn was trying to achieve with the piece • To fully understand how I want to develop the character
<p>Apply techniques</p> <p>Stage 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanislaski's use of units/blocking • Expression and inflection • Work closely with Dan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a highly comical piece, as I have not attempted to perform anything like this before it is overwhelming to try and make people laugh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To include different techniques that will help to create a high standard performance • To identify the mood/tone of the piece • To fully enhance the comedy within the piece.
<p>Learn the lines and rehearse</p> <p>Stage 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearse the piece and set challenges. • By using the time in our lessons to work closely with Dan and focus on the piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of time needs to be spent on other things. For example; monologues and our other unit of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be able to rehearse the piece without scripts • To be, as a pair, confident without

			<p>the script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn all of the words • To develop the characters accurately • To improve on all of my skills • To fully achieve the comedy and eccentricity expected in the piece
<p>Feedback</p> <p>Stage 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a feedback chart • Have regular discussion about the group piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not created a feedback chart until now and so some feedback has been lost. • I may not be able to fill out the feedback chart immediately after every performance and therefore some feedback may be slightly inaccurate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have an accurate feedback chart which is filled in regularly • To conclude the positive and negative aspects of both mine and Dan's performances to help myself and Dan equally.
<p>Dress and technical rehearsal</p> <p>Stage 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat this rehearsal as if it is the actual performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being prepared for the dress rehearsal, this may include not having an appropriate costume or not having the lighting in place. • Staging may be difficult due to the content of the piece. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To run through our piece with all costumes and lighting in place

<p>Perform the piece</p> <p>Stage 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being fully prepared to perform the piece 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have successfully performed the piece; showcasing my skills development.
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To present my progress clearly, I have decided to split my rehearsal diaries into stages. Each action will count as one stage.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage one

ACTION: RESEARCH THE PIECE

IN ORDER TO GIVE AN ENTERTAINING AND RELEVANT PERFORMANCE OF KAREN IN MY DUOLOGUE IT IS IMPORTANT TO FULLY RESEARCH THE PLAY, CHARACTER AND PLAYWRIGHT. I WILL RESEARCH THE WORK OF ALAN AYCKBOURN TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HE WANTED TO ACHIEVE WITH THE CHARACTER OF KAREN AND WILL THEN SEE HOW OTHER ACTRESSES HAVE INTERPRETED THE CHARACTER. THIS WILL ENABLE ME TO GAIN SOME PERSPECTIVE ON THE CHARACTER I WISH TO DEVELOP. I WILL ALSO RESEARCH THE PLAY TO UNDERSTAND THE STORY OF THE CHARACTER.

ALAN AYCKBOURN:

Alan Ayckbourn is a very highly regarded theatre director and is one of the most prolific playwrights of the English language. He has written 73 full length plays, more than half of which have gone on to London's West End. Ayckbourn has also directed over 300 plays.

Furthermore; he has also run his own company at the National Theatre. And is an Olivier, Tony and Moliere Award winning playwright whose plays have achieved success throughout the world. In 2009 his contribution to theatre was recognised by the Olivier's Special Award.

The following information is taken from www.alanayckbourn.net.

AWARDS RECEIVED BY ALAN AYCKBOURN

1973: Evening Standard Best Comedy Award (*Absurd Person Singular*)
1974: Evening Standard Best Play Award (*The Norman Conquests*)
1974: Play and Players Best Play Award (*The Norman Conquests*)
1974: Variety Club of Great Britain Playwright of the Year
1977: Evening Standard Best Play Award (*Just Between Ourselves*)
1979: Shared Plays and Players Best Comedy Award (*Joking Apart*)
1985: Evening Standard Best Comedy Award (*A Chorus Of Disapproval*)
1985: Olivier Best Comedy Award (*A Chorus Of Disapproval*)
1985: DRAMA Best Comedy Award (*A Chorus Of Disapproval*)
1987: Evening Standard Best Play Award (*A Small Family Business*)
1988: Plays and Players Best Director Award (*A View From The Bridge*)
1989: Evening Standard Best Comedy Award (*Henceforward...*)
1990: Evening Standard Best Comedy Award (*Man Of The Moment*)
1991: Drama-Logue Critic Award (LA) (*Henceforward...*)
1993: TMA/Martini Regional Theatre Award Best Show for Children & Young People
(*Mr A's Amazing Maze Plays*)
1993: Writers' Guild of Great Britain Lifetime Achievement Award
1993: Birmingham Press Club Personality of the Year Award
1993: John Ederyn Hughes Rural Wales Award For Literature
1994: Yorkshire Man of the Year
1994: Montblanc de la Culture Award for Europe
1996: TMA Regional Theatre Awards Best Musical (*By Jeeves*)
1996: Writers' Guild of Great Britain Best West End Play (*Communicating Doors*)
1997: Lloyds Private Banking Playwright of the Year (*Things We Do For Love*)
2001: Sunday Times Award for Literary Excellence
2003: Moliere for Best Comedy (*Things We Do For Love*)
2004: Variety Club Of Great Britain Lifetime Achievement Award
2005: Yorkshire Arts And Entertainment Personality Award (Yorkshire Awards 2005)
2009: Hall Of Fame For Achievements In American Theatre
2009: The Laurence Olivier Awards Special Award
2009: Outer Critics Circle Award For Outstanding Revival (*The Norman Conquests*)
2009: The New York Drama Critics' Circle Special Citation (*The Norman Conquests*)
2009: Drama Desk Award For Best Revival (*The Norman Conquests*)
2009: Tony For Best Revival Of A Play (*The Norman Conquests*)

20 FACTS ABOUT ALAN AYCKBOURN:

1. Alan Ayckbourn was born on 12 April, 1939 to Irene Maud Worley (better known as 'Lolly' and who also wrote under the pen-name of Mary James) and Horace Ayckbourn in Hampstead.
2. Alan attended school at Wisborough Lodge and then Haileybury.
3. Alan's professional career began as an acting stage manager (a stage manager who also acted) and actor with Donald Wolfit's company with a three week engagement at the Edinburgh Festival.
4. Alan's early career saw him work as an acting stage manager at the Connaught Theatre (Worthing), the Thorndike Theatre (Leatherhead), the Oxford Playhouse and the Library Theatre (Scarborough). He joined the latter in 1957.
5. Alan's acting career ran from 1956 to 1964 and encompassed more than 50 different roles – the majority performed in-the-round.
6. Alan's playwriting career began in 1959 with *The Square Cat* (having confronted Stephen Joseph about his role in David Campton's *Ring Of Roses*). As of 2010 Alan has written 73 full-length plays; the most recent being *My Wonderful Day*.
7. Alan married his first wife Christine Roland in 1957; together they had two sons Steven and Philip. Alan's second marriage was to Heather Stoney in 1997.
8. Alan's first production as director was *Gaslight* at the Library Theatre in 1961. Since then

- he has directed more than 300 productions in the UK and abroad, including the London premieres of 32 of his plays in the West End.
9. In 1962, Alan moved with the Studio Theatre Company to the Victoria Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, as Associate Director. He both directed and acted there, as well as premiering two new plays, before leaving the company in 1964.
 10. From 1964 to 1970, Alan worked as a drama producer for BBC Radio in Leeds.
 11. Alan's first major West End success was *Relatively Speaking* in 1967; as of 2009, 39 of Alan's plays have been produced in the West End or at the National Theatre (this does not include major fringe productions).
 12. Alan Ayckbourn became the Artistic Director (Director of Productions) of the Library Theatre, Scarborough, in 1972. He stepped down from the position (of what is now the Stephen Joseph Theatre) on March 31 2009.*
 13. In 1974, Alan held the record for having the most plays running simultaneously in the West End with *Living Together*, *Table Manners*, *Round And Round The Garden*, *Absurd Person Singular* and *Absent Friends*. Only Andrew Lloyd Webber since has had more productions running concurrently.
 14. The Variety Club named Alan Playwright of the Year in 1974; between 1973 and 2009, Alan has received more than 30 major theatre awards including an Olivier Special Award in 2009. Awards for his plays include an Olivier, Moliere and Tony.
 15. In 1976 Alan wrote his first play intended for end-stage performance (*Bedroom Farce*); although he is primarily associated with the Round, he has written five plays intended for the end-stage: *Bedroom Farce*, *A Small Family Business*, *Haunting Julia*, *Things We Do For Love* and *Virtual Reality*. (For the record *Jeeves* and *House* were also first performed in the end-stage, but were not specifically written for end-stage performance)
 16. In 1976, Alan and the Library Theatre company moved to the Stephen Joseph Theatre In The Round (based at the old Boys' Grammar School). In 1996, he would again move the company to the Stephen Joseph Theatre (based at a former Odeon cinema).
 17. From 1986 to 1988, Alan was invited by Sir Peter Hall to form his own company at the National Theatre. He directed *A Small Family Business*, *A View From The Bridge*, *Tons Of Money* and *'Tis Pity She's A Whore*.
 18. In 1992, Alan was appointed Cameron Macintosh Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre, at the University of Oxford.
 19. Alan was awarded a CBE (Companion of the Order of the British Empire) in 1987. Ten years later to the day, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II 'for services to the theatre.'
 20. Fatuous fact: Alan Ayckbourn has been said to be the most performed living playwright in the world. There is no plausible way either to prove or disprove this. But he is undoubtedly very, very popular....

These facts have been compiled by Simon Murgatroyd with the help of Alan Ayckbourn and Heather Stoney. They are correct at the time of publication.

ALAN AYCKBOURN – IMAGES



THE REVENGERS' COMEDIES:

This information is taken from www.alanayckbourn.net

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

In 1989, Alan Ayckbourn decided to celebrate his 50th birthday by writing an ambitious two-part play, *The Revengers' Comedies*, an epic piece set over five hours with more than 20 characters, played by 14 actors.

The plays were inspired by Alan's great love of the cinema as a young man and it references many notable movies, the most obvious being *Strangers On A Train*. The filmic influence was carried through to the actual production as Alan envisioned a fast-moving play set in London and the countryside. Scenes are often short and move rapidly from one place to the next, offering a tremendous technical challenge. Fortunately, this process was aided by Alan bringing his London team of Roger Glossop (designer) and Mick Hughes (lighting) to Scarborough for the first time. They were able to ingeniously solve the demands of the plays, often with minimal props, a cunning pulley system and clever lighting to convey the needs of the action whilst allowing the play to move at the speed it demanded.

A large cast was assembled – the largest yet for a Scarborough production of an Ayckbourn play – and a performance schedule devised that would emphasise the fun and 'event' nature of the piece. On Saturdays, both parts of the play were performed, separated by a two-hour break: on fine days the grounds behind the Westwood building practically became a huge picnic site.

The Revengers' Comedies was a big hit in Scarborough and even became an international attraction for the town. The notorious New York Times critic Frank Rich, the 'Butcher of Broadway', acclaimed the plays for their vision. Apparently there was a substantial increase in visitors to the town from abroad as a result of this.

Thoughts turned to a transfer to London and Alan hoped the National Theatre would accept the piece, believing this was the only theatre that could successfully deal with the two play format. The National showed interest, but only if Alan condensed the plays into one play. Alan refused to alter them and there was an impasse. Alan's frequent London producer Michael Codron offered to produce the plays in the West End in two parts. The well-known TV comedian Griff Rhys Jones took the part of Henry, Joanna Lumley played Imogen and the then unknown actress Lia Williams took on the role of Karen to great acclaim. Lia would go on to become one of the pre-eminent actresses of her generation.

The play proved problematic transferring to the proscenium arch; what could be suggested in the round had to be seen in the proscenium, such as an impressive if over-the-top flyable section of the Albert Bridge. Expensive moving walkways were installed to allow the sets to move on and off quickly – which were not as successful as the 'string' technology of Scarborough. The plays seemed in danger of being overwhelmed by the production and subsequently opened to very mixed reviews. Audiences were also not used to visiting the theatre twice and sales did not go well. The plays opened on 17 October 1991 and closed

on 4 January 1992.

Due to its scale, *The Revengers' Comedies* has rarely been seen since. The BBC adapted it for the radio and a film version was made with a cast which included Sam Neill and Helena Bonham Carter. It was not picked up for cinema distribution and went straight to television.

PLOT SYNOPSIS:

The piece starts with a brief prologue on Albert Bridge, SW3 at midnight. Two strangers meet there. Henry, a 42 year old executive, divorced and recently made redundant, and Karen, 25 rich, beautiful, upper class and decidedly eccentric. Both are apparently trying to jump off the bridge and end it all. (Karen has been crossed in love). As a result of their meeting, they drive to Karen's huge mid Victorian country home in Dorset where they strike a bargain whereby each agrees to exact revenge on behalf of the other. Henry sort of gets talked into it but never really pursues the idea with much enthusiasm, at least not initially. He quite enjoys living the life of a country squire in Karen's home with just her equally dotty 21 year old brother Oliver for company and two very eccentric female servants.

Complications ensue when Henry falls in love with the object of Karen's revenge, the lovely farmer's wife Imogen Staxton-Billing. Instead of plotting her downfall, Henry starts an affair that is conducted wherever the couple can meet - mostly in cowsheds and piggeries. Despite the presence of Imogen's boorish husband Anthony, things for Henry are pretty idyllic. But chickens tend to come home to roost. While he has been enjoying the countryside, Karen has been having a ball in the city, doing a sort of one-woman take over bid for Lembridge Tennit, the vast conglomerate for which Henry originally worked. Starting as a humble 'temp' secretary, Karen begins her Machiavellian climb to the top. Two of her bosses meet violent deaths and a third (female) has a nervous breakdown. Henry meantime finds himself fighting a shotgun duel with Imogen's husband and (by sheer fluke) killing him. He is now free to marry Imogen but, increasingly, he is torn between his love for her and his promise to Karen to wreak (Karen's) revenge on her. Karen, now a top executive, returns and demands her pound of flesh. Thwarted, she burns down the country home, makes vague threats on Imogen's life and has Henry fired from his new job. A final showdown occurs back on Albert Bridge with Henry and the two women. True love conquers and Henry and Imogen walk off into the sunset. Karen, now completely off her trolley is left to commit her final act of 'revenge' on the couple as she hurls herself into the Thames.

(Synopsis by Alan Ayckbourn)

REVIEWS:

The Revengers' Comedies (by Michael Coveney)

"By way of a 50th birthday present to himself, Alan Ayckbourn has written one monster five-hour play in two parts. *The Revengers' Comedies* constitute his 37th piece, which takes him, numerically speaking, just about level with Shakespeare.

Heretical though it may sound, the evening is not a success. It drags and falters as the invocation of revenge tragedy breaks down half way through, leaving the characters nowhere to go. The worlds of small city business and countryside emotional capers become hollow farcical environments once the action has drained them of plot significance.

We start on Albert Bridge, London, where two would-be suicides, Henry Bell and Karen Knightly, save each other and repair to a motorway cafe to swap tales of woe and, finally, revenge strategies. Divorced Henry has lost his job in a rationalisation process initiated by the ghastly Bruce Tick (who has, of course, a wife and two little Ticks). Karen has been ditched by a vile, gun-toting adulterer, and has set his wife, Imogen Staxton-Billing, firmly in her sights.

The revenge pact is sealed by a night of lust at Karen's West Country family pile, where the hapless Henry is casually immersed in a medieval backwater of servants and mucking out, passed off as an accountant and given new clothes.

These are the best scenes, set in a quirkily reinvented version of Daphne du Maurier's *Mandalay*, with an imperious head servant (Doreen Andrew) turning blind eyes as quick as look at you, and an entire gallery of glorious local types including Donald Douglas's crusty colonel (Karen's uncle), Clare Skinner's brilliantly petrified Tweeny and Alwyne Taylor's voluminous councillor, the little maid's aunt.

Henry re-writes the script by falling in love with his prey, sneaking clandestine cuddles with Imogen among the mud and dirt of pigs and chickens. While Henry dithers and flails, Karen is scything her way through the commercial undergrowth like *Tourneur's Vindice* at the corrupt Italian court. She leaves false messages, distorts her appearance in pursuit of secretarial power and ingeniously wreaks marital havoc between the Ticks.

The trouble with the structure is that the two adventures are soon running along parallel, not inter-crossing, lines. In the second play, Karen's campaign against Tick has expired along with the belching, nose-picking victim (Jeff Shankley), and further office mayhem involving a spinsterish gorgon and her fey bachelor boss seems a weak repetition and, anyway, more do with her own psychotic insecurity than the revenge plot.

There are Chekhovian complications down on the Dorset farm where, as in *The Three Sisters*, we have a duel and a fire. Staxton-Billing is accidentally bumped off and Henry spliced with the widow in what is ruefully described as a shotgun wedding. Henry has raised the stakes, but not his own game. The irresistibly ascendant Karen, coming under increasing suspicion of pyromania, is buying up the surrounding land and planning to build a plastics factory.

Henry is a comic blunderer whose impact depends on the projection of an actor's personality. Jon Strickland is only partially successful in making him funny, while Christine Kavanagh's Karen, hard as nails, glossy as paint, is bossily strident with, for me, rapidly diminishing returns. Elizabeth Bell's Imogen is the outstanding performance, desperate, practical and touching in the true tragi-comic Ayckbourn vein.

There are resemblances here to the great thriller noir *A Small Family Business*, but I doubt if the piece will achieve similar prominence. Written with far less technical ingenuity than, say, *Intimate Exchanges* or even *Henceforward*, you feel *The Revengers' Comedies* might remain a brave try in Ayckbourn's ongoing experiment in styles of narrative.

Still, you can see for yourself until the end of September; it would be fruitless to see one half without the other. Ayckbourn's production underlines once more the logistical miracles that are continuously wrought in this intimate in-the-round, with excellent technical back up from Roger Glossop (settings), Liz Da Costa (costumes) and Mick Hughes (lighting)."

(*Financial Times*, 15 June 1989)

Revengers' Comedies (by Michael Ratcliffe)

"Alan Ayckbourn's new play rests on the exaltation of revenge as a fire that never goes out but always seeks new victims to consume. I say 'play' because, although there are two parts to *The Revengers' Comedies* (Stephen Joseph, Scarborough), booked and performed separately, they are continuous, and it is assumed at the start of part two that the audience will have seen part one.

At Tuesday's press night, they were given in sequence, beginning at six and ending, after an hour's interval, at 12.20 p.m. This is certainly not the way to see them, because it exposes their repetitions and light-headed serial techniques too keenly.

The Revengers' Comedies start with a marvellous idea and set it up beautifully. Wicked, spoiled Karen (Christine Kavanagh) and good, neglected Henry (Jon Strickland) each prevent the other from jumping off Chelsea Bridge. Karen's Dorset lover has returned to Imogen, his battleaxe wife (Elizabeth Bell); Henry has been sacked by his conglomerate bosses and replaced by a blustering rat called Bruce Tick (Jeff Shankley). Karen suggests

they take over each other's revenges: Henry will go for Imogen and she will tackle Tick. The conspiracy goes wrong when Henry falls in love with Imogen, not a battleaxe at all but an oppressed wife. Karen's implacable course takes her to the top of Henry's old firm, but there is no balancing intensity in the love affair which, beginning in delicate tenderness, goes dull. The two stories proceed quite separately for much of part two and, although the play is filled up with villains, grotesques, running gags and pastiches, Ayckbourn does nothing in five and a quarter hours that he would not do more sharply and dangerously in three. His company is splendid."
(The Observer, 18 June 1989)

PRODUCTIONS:

World Premiere

Premiere: 13 June 1989
 Venue: Stephen Joseph Theatre In The Round,
 Scarborough
 Staging: Round

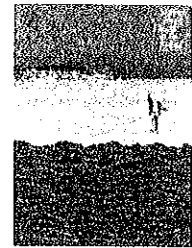
Director: Alan Ayckbourn
 Design: Roger Glossop
 Lighting: Mick Hughes
 Costumes: Liz da Costa

Character:

Henry Bell
 Karen Knightly
 Bruce Tick
 Mrs Bulley / Winnie
 Norma / Tracey
 Oliver, Karen's brother
 Lady Ganton / Veronica
 Colonel Marcus Lipscomb
 Percy Cutting
 Councillor Teale / Hilary Tick
 Anthony Staxton-Billing
 Imogen Staxton-Billing
 Lydia Lucas
 Graham / Jeremy

Actor:

Jon Strickland
 Christine Kavanagh
 Jeff Shankley
 Doreen Andrew
 Claire Skinner
 Adam Godley
 Ursula Jones
 Donald Douglas
 Martin Sadler
 Alwyne Taylor
 Rupert Vansittart
 Elizabeth Bell
 Frances Jeater
 Frank Lazarus



London Premiere

Premiere: 16 (pt.1) / 17 (pt.2) October 1991
 Closed: 4 January 1992
 Venue: The Strand Theatre, London
 Staging: End-stage

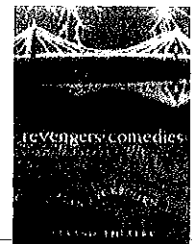
Director: Alan Ayckbourn
 Design: Roger Glossop
 Lighting: Mick Hughes
 Costumes: Lindy Hemming

Character:

Henry Bell
 Karen Knightly
 Percy Cutting
 Mrs Bulley / Winnie
 Norma, a servant
 Oliver, Karen's brother
 Lady Ganton / Lydia Lucas
 Colonel Marcus Lipscomb
 Councillor Teale / Hilary
 Anthony Staxton-Billing
 Imogen Staxton-Billing
 Tracey Willingforth
 Bruce Tick
 Graham / Jeremy
 Veronica Webb
 Fireman / Motor-Cyclist

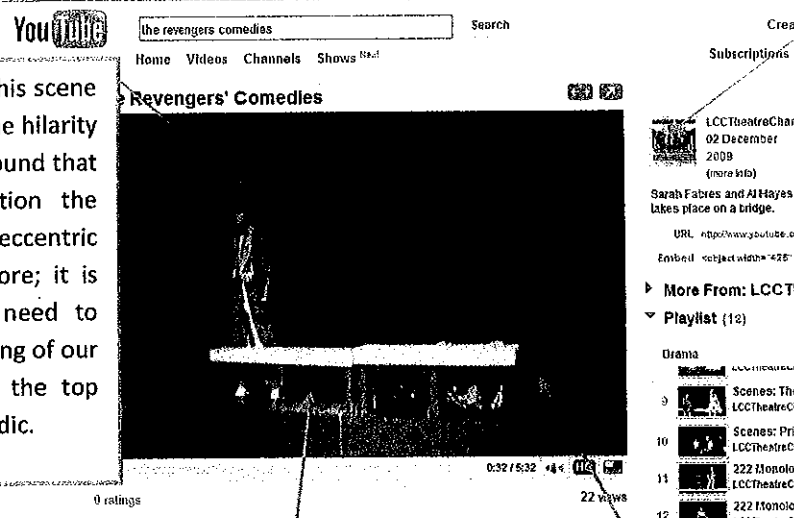
Actor:

Griff Rhys Jones
 Lia Williams
 Raymond Sawyer
 Doreen Andrew
 Rose Keegan
 Adam Godley
 Lavinia Bertram
 Jeffry Wickham
 Hazel Ellerby
 Rupert Vansittart
 Joanna Lumley
 Nina Young
 Jeff Shankley
 Geoffrey Whitehead
 Jennifer Piercey
 Christopher Birch



Other Actors/Actresses Interpretations

SARAH FABRES AND AL HAYES -- TAKEN FROM WWW.YOUTUBE.COM



The staging of this scene is essential to the hilarity of the piece; I found that in this production the staging isn't eccentric enough. Therefore; it is clear that we need to ensure the staging of our version is over the top and more comedic.

I feel as though the relationship between the characters was not strong enough. I would personally like to add a lot of opportunity for clambering over each other and touching each other.

In this version I liked the choice of costumes, the scarf is essential to the script but the coat also adds a sense of upper class to the character of Henry.

The upper class persona and accent of both characters adds to the comedy of the piece and the eccentricity of the characters.

YouTube interface details: Search: the revengers comedies, Home Videos Channels Shows, Revengers' Comedies, LCCTheatreChannel, 02 December 2009, Sarah Fabres and Al Hayes takes place on a bridge, URL: http://www.youtube.com, Playlist (12), Drama, 9 Scenes: The Revenge..., 10 Scenes: Pride and P..., 11 222 Monologues: Mei, 12 222 Monologues Tiff...

Rehearsal diaries

Stage two

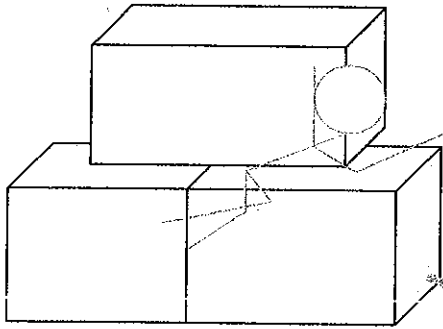
ACTION: APPLYING TECHNIQUES TO THE PIECE

IN THIS STAGE I WILL HAVE TO APPLY TECHNIQUES TO MY MONOLOGUE, THIS IS AN ONGOING PROCESS AND WILL THEREFORE WILL BE COMPLETED OVER A NUMBER OF LESSONS. I HAVE MANY IDEAS OF MY OWN, SOME OF WHICH I HAVE INITIATED FROM RESEARCHING OTHER ACTORS/ACTRESSES ADAPTION'S.

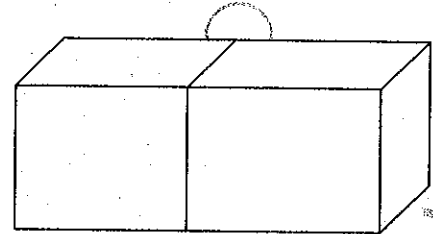
Lesson one: In this lesson me and Dan sat down together and started to divide our script into units using Stanislavski's blocking techniques. We decided on each unit together

depending on the content and emotional changes within the text. Below is our script divided into the units we decided on within the lesson:

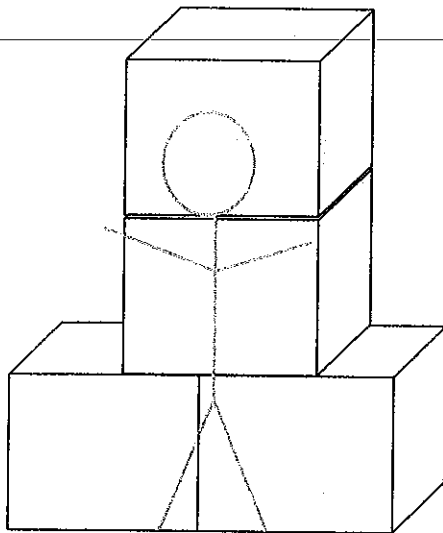
Lesson two: Today we began to stage the piece, the most important thing was to find a way in which we could portray my character in a way that was clear to be hanging off a bridge and that would also be easy to climb over. We decided to use the staging blocks as they were readily available and suitable. We arranged them in a number of ways to try and create a bridge scene:



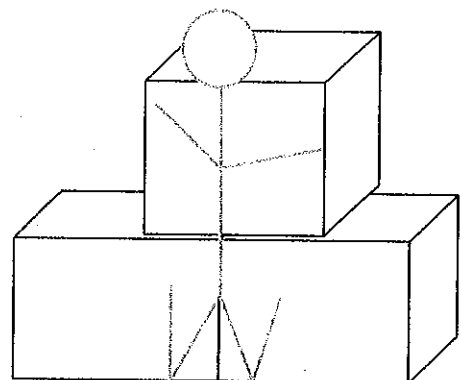
So then we tried a way that would give me the opportunity to face the audience and that I would be able to move freely. I found that in this arrangement I could do both of these things, however; when it came to being lifted up over the bridge the blocks were simply too high, it would never work.



After a discussion, we generated certain things that would be necessary in the staging arrangement these were: that Dan would have to be higher than me on a block that I would have to be lifted up onto, I would have to be facing the audience and the blocks could not be too high. We came up with this arrangement and it proved to be successful.



Firstly; we tried this way, however it was too hard to move over the staging blocks as they were too awkwardly arranged. It did not portray a believable representation of someone hanging off a bridge.



We then tried this way, it meant that for the first part of the piece the audience could hear, but not see Karen, although it proved to be a successful arrangement to climb over we didn't like the fact that we had lost view of my facial expressions and that it would be much funnier if I were to be facing the audience.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage three

ACTION: LEARNING THE LINES AND REHEARSING

IN THIS STAGE WE CONCENTRATED ON LEARNING THE LINES AND FULLY REHEARSED THE PIECE

Lesson three: In the first lesson on this piece me and Dan just got used to the script and had a 'play around' with different staging and interpretations of the script. For a while we sat down together and read through the script a few times. By doing so; we started to develop the characters of Karen and Henry and the relationship between them.

Lesson four: In today's lesson we started to develop the different units of the piece, adding movement, gestures and expression. We worked really hard to gain the inflection needed to create the comedy of the piece.

Lesson five: Today, dan and I walked through the piece adding different ideas, we both agreed on the following things:

- Dan would walk around behind me on stage and then react when I said my opening line.
- Dan would become visible to me on the line 'it's my coat do you see' by peering over the top of the box.
- I would fall forward on the line 'careful'.
- I would be pulled on top of the box by the time I say 'Gosh, that was terrifying'.
- I would be standing on the highest box and dan would be standing on the second highest box by the time he says 'there'.
- To stay in visibility of the camera we would not leave the blocks, but would seem to be leaving the bridge by walking backwards.

Lesson six: In today's lesson we focused simply on learning the lines. Our teacher worked through each unit with us thoroughly, to develop deeper learning. By the end of the lesson we could recall all units with little hesitation.

Lesson seven: Today we began work on the first and second unit. We adopted posh, snobbish voices and developed characterization, facial expression and gestures.

Lesson eight: Today we began work on the third and fourth unit. We developed characterization, facial expression and gestures.

Lesson nine: We had a very long lesson today and me and dan decided to focus entirely on this piece. We went through it many times and made some minor changes to reactions and movement.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage four

ACTION: FEEDBACK

NOW THAT WE HAVE BEGAN TO PUT THE PERFORMANCE TOGETHER I WILL START TO NOTATE OUR FEEDBACK, THIS MAY BE FROM MY TEACHER, OTHER PEERS, FAMILY OR THE GROUP. I WILL DO THIS IN TWO WAYS, THE FIRST WILL BE THROUGH REGULAR GROUP DISCUSSIONS THAT WILL TAKE PLACE DURING LESSON TIME AND THE FINAL WAY WILL BE TO PRODUCE A FEEDBACK CHART. THIS WILL ENABLE ME TO IMPROVE ON MY PERFORMANCE AND TO HELP DAN IMPROVE ON HIS EQUALLY.

Below is my feedback chart for 'The Revengers' Comedies':

FEEDBACK CHART FOR 'THE REVENGERS COMEDIES'

FEEDBACK FROM:	FEEDBACK (POSITIVE/NEGATIVE):	ACTION:
Miss Craig Miss Craig Miss Craig & Amy Miss Craig & Dan Miss Craig, Dan, Beth Dan Beth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Good understanding of expression / inflection * Good understanding of the humour interpreted in the piece. * work on characterisation * need to learn lines * Good interaction with Dan on Stage * Good understanding of character. * Further develop the relationship between Karen and Henry * Effective use of stage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * continue to develop expressive inflection & apply to piece. * continue to find ways to interpret humour into the piece. * Take part in the exercises I have researched * learn lines by next week. * continue to work closely with Dan. * keep finding ways to build the character of Karen. * work closely with dan, work on characterisation and focus on reactions.
Beth & Miss Craig Beth & Miss Craig Beth & Miss Craig Dan, Beth, Miss Craig & Amy Miss Craig	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * good spacial awareness * Facial expressions are good. * I am providing good ideas for the piece which are adding to the comedy aspect. * working incredibly well as part of a team. * characterisation is relevant & very effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Be aware of health & safety but continue to apply this when rehearsing & performing. * Continue to develop expressions to enforce forth progression - * work closely with Dan and interpret both of our ideas into the piece, build comedy. * continue to work closely with Dan. * continue to develop and apply to the piece ready for performance.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage five

ACTION: DRESS AND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL

BEFORE WE PERFORM OUR GROUP PIECE IT IS ESSENTIAL TO HAVE A DRESS AND TECHNICAL REHEARSAL TO ENSURE THAT THE LIGHTING, PROPS, AND STAGING ARE ALL CORRECTLY IN PLACE. WE WILL HAVE TO DECIDE ON THE PLACE WE WISH TO PERFORM THE PIECE, PROPS AND LIGHTING CHANGES WE ALL WANT TO APPLY BEFORE PERFORMING OUR GROUP PIECE AS OUR FINAL PIECE.

PERFORMANCE SPACE:

Due to the staging needed to perform the piece our choices for 'The revenger's comedies' was limited. The boxes we were using took up a large amount of space and therefore it would have been senseless to try and film our duologue in the drama studio even though it was better for projection and lighting. Therefore; we set up our staging in the theatre and after rehearsing the piece a few times found that it was very suitable to our needs.

PROPS AND COSTUME:

To create a believable bridge scene we want our characters to wear outdoor clothing, it is specifically essential that I wear a coat with a hood as my character of 'Karen' gets this caught on the bridge. It is also necessary that Dan wears a scarf as a key part of the play is when I grab hold of the scarf and accidentally choke Dan.

PROJECTION:

We have decided to use a projection of Albert Bridge in the background of our performance. We decided to use a projection as it was hard to create the sense of being on a bridge using staging alone.

LIGHTING:

With regards to lighting, we want it to be quite dark as the piece is set at 12 o'clock at night. We like the idea of having a spotlight on us as a focus when we are both sitting together on the bridge and at the beginning of the piece.

Performing Arts: Teacher/Tutor Statement

AS PERFORMING ARTS G381

Unit: G381 Acting	Date of Observation: Sept 2009–March 2010
Assignment : Skills Development	Activity: Acting Workshops and Performance
Learner: Rebecca	Teacher/Tutor/Witness:

Comment
<p>Rebecca shows a good understanding of the text and of the contemporary genre. She is accurate with her reading showing good control. Rebecca within a short space of time is able to display a strategy that includes making intelligent guesses at textual meaning and character interpretation. She plays around with her vocal looking for different responses that she can apply. Exploration of lines, use of the narrative, tempo, pace, pauses and tone are all considered. Rebecca reads with fluency and colour. She is able to establish character objectives, subtext, setting and time.</p> <p>Met challenges of playing a choral member. She has worked extensively on the entrance of the character with focus on the physicality. She has also adopted facial expression and gestures to capture the very 'blank face' approach. There are glimpses of the character's very vulnerable side in the use of storytelling. Rebecca brings this out very well. Rebecca is able to flesh out the character and generate new ideas.</p>
<p>Rebecca is able to conjure up characters and situations in response to any given situation. Rebecca is able to work with spontaneous improvisations as well as prepared improvisations. She can respond to a range of given stimuli and produce creative, imaginative and believable situations. She is confident to work as an individual or as part of the group, taking the lead or as part of a chorus. Rebecca is well focused and concentrates on the task. She is totally committed to finding the best response she can. Her application of self is both motivational and inspirational to others. Rebecca has developed excellent awareness of the potential uses of improvisation in creating all aspects of her work. She was able to add moments of improvised acting with her performance work.</p>
<p>Rebecca is able to portray a range of characters that have credibility and interest. She has worked extensively on the entrance of a character. She is able to establish the physicality and the vocal demands of a character. She has demonstrated the walk, the gestures, the thoughts and the history of characters she has played. Workshops have included role on the wall, switching roles, freeze framing, thought tracking, hot seating, interviewing, off stage life and character summary. Rebecca is able to flesh out the character and generate new ideas. She is able to employ aspects of movement, motivation, gestures, body language, language including accents, dialects, register, speech patterns, attitude, intention, picking up cues, pause, clarity and pace, volume and projection.</p>
<p>Good imagining of character's predicament. Remained focussed and absorbed in the situation, paying good attention to the need to listen and react only to what she could hear. She showed ease in playing the character and her complex existence.</p>

Convincing performance - concentration and focus strong and really seemed to believe. There were no lapses in focus or commitment. Rebecca worked hard to bring her character to life. Her approach was touching and the character's naivety became a focal point. Rebecca played a significant part in establishing the standards required. Rebecca captured some effective moments in the piece.

Throughout this unit Rebecca has explored every opportunity to acquire new techniques. She has enjoyed learning and applying. These techniques have helped Rebecca to improve her awareness of audience, performance elements, integration and communication. She is able to create characters and sustain them. She responds with energy and enthusiasm, listens to feedback and works to perfect her level of skills. Rebecca's work in performance was very good. She was able to demonstrate how her acting skills had developed produce performance work that was watchable and engaging.

Rehearsal diaries

Stage six

ACTION: PERFORMANCE

THE FINAL STAGE IS TO EVALUATE THE FINAL PERFORMANCE OF THE PIECE, COMMENTING ON FEEDBACK AND THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS WHICH AFFECTED THE PERFORMANCE.

The final performance of my chosen duologue was adequate. As the piece is working process it wasn't at performance standard but Dan and I provided a good quality piece of theatre nonetheless. Our communication was one of the highlights of the piece and our interactions successfully provided the humour which is intended.

I believe that our spatial awareness was of high quality as it was a challenge working amongst the boxes which created the bridge.

Another positive outcome which amounted from our work on this duologue is the development we have undergone with regards to teamwork – I now know that I can be a vital member of any group, focus on what is best for a group, lead a group and contribute equally.

To improve the piece we could have further developed the characterization of both Henry and Karen and could have possibly thought about accents.

Also, I faltered with a couple of my lines, this could have been prevented if we took greater time learning lines and rehearsing. I have decided that I need to develop the skill of concentration further, as when working in a pair, it was slightly impaired.

SKILLS AUDIT TWO:

IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY PERSONAL TARGETS OF PROGRESSION I WILL PRODUCE A SKILLS AUDIT. BY IDENTIFYING DIFFERENT SKILLS THAT I WISH TO DEVELOP, AND GIVING MYSELF A MARK OUT OF TEN FOR EACH ONE ON A REGULAR BASIS, I WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP TRACK OF MY IMPROVEMENTS. I WILL PRODUCE ONE BEFORE I START MY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND ONE AFTER TO SHOW THE PROGRESS I HAVE MADE IN MY OPINION.

THE SKILLS THAT I HAVE DEVELOPED ARE:

- Breath control
- Volume projection
- Articulation and diction
- Expression and inflection
- Spatial awareness
- Characterization
- Coordination
- Concentration
- Gesture and facial expression
- Improvisation
- Stage presence
- Clarity of voice
- Teamwork
- Maintaining character

SKILLS AUDIT TWO:

Skill	Positive:	Negative:	Mark
Breath control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I regularly participate in breathing exercises before rehearsals and am constantly improving the technique. • I understand the significance of breath control whilst performing. • I can apply breath control to most of my pieces. • I can control my pace which leads to better breath control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes in a long and challenging piece I become out of breath and find it hard to regain it. 	9/10
Volume projection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can adjust my vocal projection as and 		

	<p>where appropriate depending on the tone and style of the piece and audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can perform with the correct volume easily in any staging area. • I can control the volume of my voice even when the piece requires you to be loud. 		9/10
Articulation and diction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a high understanding of pronunciation. • I adapt to the reading of texts easily no matter how hard the vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is still room for improvement, i sometimes come across words or context which I am unsure of, I believe that more practice and training in this area will develop my skill to a higher ability. 	8/10
Expression and inflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand fully how expression and inflection varies depending on tone and emotion and can often apply this to my character. • Being familiarized with texts contrasting in tone and context has enabled me to gain a wider perspective on this skill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes I can interpret the meaning of some phrases within texts wrongly, and this can lead to confusion over the expression and inflection needed. 	9/10
Spatial awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have had the chance to work in many different staging areas and therefore have a good understanding of special awareness needed in different spaces. • We often participate in special awareness warm ups which have developed my ability greatly over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although I can use this technique fully, sometimes when I get carried away in a performance my special awareness falters. 	9/10
Characterization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have been studying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters can be 	

	<p>performing arts and drama for a number of years and have been able to develop this technique to a high level over this period of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a lot of confidence in this area. • I can apply appropriate characterization to many different characters offered to me. 	<p>developed in different ways and I would like to encourage myself to explore characters I play in different ways.</p>	9/10
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exercises and techniques that I participate in during warm ups have improved my coordination greatly. 		8/10
Concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My concentration as I have matured and began to take acting more seriously has improved greatly. • I can often gain concentration quickly and maintain it through a number of pieces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My concentration falters when I am performing a comedic piece. 	8/10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I now get less distracted by other members in my group 		
Gesture and facial expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a high understanding of the gesture and facial expressions needed at different points in a performance and can apply these naturally and effectively. • I can display appropriate emotions through these skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I sometimes over think my reactions and this can cause my gesture and facial expressions to be delayed or look 'applied'. 	9/10
Improvisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am beginning to understand the skills needed to create good improvisation. • I can react and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I still lack confidence when it comes to improvisation and believe it to be one of my weaker skills that I wish to 	7/10