

A student's guide to the GCSE in

DRAMA



What is GCSE Drama all about?

GCSE Drama is all about understanding what it is like to put yourself in somebody else's shoes. You will play many parts in different imaginary situations. You will have the opportunity to create your own work as well as look at plays written by other people.

The course is in three parts:

- in part one of the course you will use drama to express your feelings and ideas about a range of issues
- in part two of the course you will look at a play to see how a playwright expresses their ideas about a theme or topic and explore ways of making the play work on stage
- in part three of the course you will have the choice of being involved in the performance of a play from an existing script or one you can create yourselves.



Will I enjoy this course?

You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that is both practical and creative. You may have done some acting before or helped out backstage on a production. You may have always wanted to have a go at making a play, performing, making costumes, building a set or operating the lights but never had the chance. You will enjoy this course if you enjoy working as part of a team as Drama involves a lot of group work.



How does it follow on from what I have learned before?

GCSE Drama follows on from drama work that you will have done at Key Stage 3 (years 7-9). You will develop your improvisation and acting skills to a higher level. You will also look at plays in more detail and look at different ways of bringing a script alive on stage.

What about exams?

The examination for GCSE Drama is a practical performance. It is worth 40% of the marks.

You will take part in a play that you have created as a group or rehearsed from a script. You can either be examined on your acting skills in the performance or on your design and technical skills (stage design, costume, masks and makeup, lighting or sound). You will perform the play in front of an audience and the examiner will be present at one of the performances.

Is there any coursework?

The 60% coursework part of the GCSE Drama course consists of practical performance work and a written notebook of evidence. During your course you will take part in 2 different workshops that will be marked by your teacher. In one of the workshops you will use all that you have learnt about Drama to explore your responses to a range of material presented to you by your teacher. In the other workshop you will explore a play and show your understanding of drama by taking part in a number of exercises based on the play. You will be assessed on your practical work and on the supporting notes you keep during the workshops.

What about my results?

You can achieve grades A* to G in GCSE Drama. The final grade is reported in August.

What other skills might I develop?

As well as acquiring the skills involved in creating and performing Drama, you will also be able to acquire skills in working with others, problem solving and communication. You will find that Drama will help you feel more self-confident and prepare you to deal with a range of different situations and people.

What could I do next with GCSE Drama?

There are many things you can go on to do with a GCSE in Drama. If you are unsure about what to do next, the best thing to do is to speak to your Drama teacher who will know about the choices on offer.

You could go on to take an AS or A level in Drama and Theatre Studies, or a Vocational A level in Performing Arts or a BTEC National Certificate or Diploma in Performing Arts or Performance Design and Technology.

You may wish to take a GCSE in Drama for its own sake, perhaps to form the basis of a future interest or as part of a range of other subjects. Or you might wish to go into a job where it is useful to have had experience of Drama, or where you will need to use some of the skills developed during this course. These might include careers in such fields as retail, travel and tourism, sales and marketing or any career that involves meeting people face to face. The study of Drama can help you develop transferable skills which you can take into any career or job.