

# Year 9 Performing Arts (Drama)

## Week 1/2

**Naturalism-** refers to theatre that tries to create a perfect illusion of reality.

**Main practitioner-** Konstantin Stanislavski. 1863-1938

**Main concept-** It gives the illusion of real life presented on stage. It aimed to replace the artificial romantic style (melodrama) with accurate representations of ordinary people in believable situations.

**Actors-** must thoroughly research their roles so that they can act 'from the inside out' it isn't enough to just know your lines and 'play' the character, they need to 'be' the character. The character should have inner thoughts and a backstory.

**The System-** was developed by Stanislavski. It made sure an actor was fully immersed in the role. They must visualise and use their imagination constantly to think and behave like the character.

**Actions and Objectives-** each time a character speaks they should have an objective (what they are aiming for) so that everything they do and say has meaning. Their action is 'how' they deliver the line for example an active verb like 'annoy', 'flatter' or 'argue' will completely alter the way you say something.

## Week 3/4

**Brechtian/Epic theatre-** is the term for the commonly used style of non-naturalistic drama.

**Main practitioner-** Bertolt Brecht 1898-1956

**Main concept-** Brecht believed the naturalistic style allowed audiences to 'hang up their brains with their hats in the cloakroom'. He wanted audiences to think about the 'big issues' and to spark debate.

**Vefremdungs effect-** Brecht wanted to alienate the audience so they weren't caught up in the emotional content of the play. This would allow them to think objectively. This meant using anything that would break the reality of the piece, eg direct address, multi-role, exaggeration, stereotypes, breaking the 4<sup>th</sup> wall, minimal set/prop or costume, etc.

**Epic-** His plays could use multiple ways to show the audience his message. This could include the V-effect but also, music, placards, projected images all working together to make sure the point was clear.

**Spass-** this means 'fun' and is part of the v-effect and epic style but specifically he might make something funny that shouldn't be funny so an audience contemplates their moral compass.

## Week 5/6

**Verbatim-** is a performance that uses exact transcripts from real people.

**Dates-** this style started in the 1950s there is no one practitioner but it has grown in popularity since the 1990s.

**Main concept-** Verbatim tries to showcase the words of the 'ignored and forgotten'. It centres on big issues and moral and ethical debates. By using the words of real people it allows their opinions and experiences to be highlighted.

**Trancsripts-** verbatim theatre should include every 'err', 'umm', stutter, or repeat, regardless of how it sounds when said out loud. It is important to do this because then it sounds like the person who originally said it and is totally unbiased in it's performance. Actors and directors will write it down exactly or work from recordings.

**Directorial decisions-** these transcripts may be dull if performed with nothing else (as it is just a person talking) so it is up to the director to use movement, sound, dance, other actors, backdrops etc to create more interest and to add their own message to the piece of drama.

## Week 7/8

**Physical Theatre-** is a form of non-naturalistic drama that relies on movement to tell the story or promote the message. **Dates-** although there are origins in Ancient Greece with the use of choral movement or in the 1500s Commedia de'll Arte exaggerated mime style, modern Physical Theatre has grown out of the non-naturalistic drama and dance of the C20<sup>th</sup>. By the 1990s DV8 and Frantic Assembly were very famous companies creating physical theatre work

**Main concept-** Physical theatre is a very complex mix of drama, mime, gesture and dance to create a highly visual style of performance where movement is used to create meaning. Metaphors are used to engage the audience but leave it up to them to interpret the performance. Necessary and very effective dialogue is included- the performance is not 'mime'. Performances can be solo but generally will use group and unison movement.

**Themes-** Physical theatre can be used to tell a story (like Robin Hood or Othello) but equally can be used to highlight topical issues and moral debates. It could be used alongside Verbatim or Epic techniques.

## Week 9/10

Look back at each section and make sure you have thoroughly researched and understood each area.

Research each of these practitioners/companies to make sure you have a complete understanding. Try watching some clips of the suggested work to help further your appreciation of each style.

### Naturalism

Research Konstantin Stanislavski  
A Dolls House- Henrik Ibsen  
The Crucible- Arthur Miller

### Epic

Research Bertolt Brecht  
Shakers Bouncers- John Godber

### Verbatim

Too much Punch-Mark Wheeler

### Physical theatre

Research DV8 and Frantic Assembly- Lloyd Newson (how to videos on YouTube)  
Robin Hood- Off Balance Physical Theatre Company.