
A Guide to Devising for A Level

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1. Introduction to devising

Devising from a text stimulus requires all the skills of the deviser as well as the additional skills of literary analysis. The elements of the texts to be explored are:

- form
- structure
- character(s)
- dialogue
- themes, issues and ideas.

By applying their literary understanding the students will then be able to make connections with practitioner methodology and appropriate styles of performance.

This guide will outline possible playwrights and a selection of practitioners' approaches to theatre making. It will then present ways that the text extract can be practically investigated to link with particular practitioner conventions and methods. The opportunities for devising pathways are endless.

First it is important to check the details of Component 1, as outlined in the A level specification; these must be adhered to in the delivery of this Component:

- The performance must be a completely original work that uses an extract from a text as a stimulus. This means that words and lines from the extract must be reordered, reimagined and placed alongside the original words of the students or completely absent from the final devised work.
- The students must use a text extract, but they can bring in other stimuli as appropriate.
- The influence of the practitioner must be demonstrated in the performance and the portfolio. This could incorporate one or more of the following:
 - imitating or emulating the performance style and/or use of theatrical conventions of the practitioner
 - implementing the working methodology/methodologies (evidenced through either the portfolio or the portfolio and the performance)
 - adapting the text to match the philosophy of the practitioner's performance style and/or use of theatrical conventions.
- The practitioner is a free choice for the centre to choose but must not be the same as the practitioner selected in Section C of the A level written exam (Component 3). However, any other practitioner from the Component 3 list is permitted.

The specification gives the following definition of a practitioner:

- An individual or a company that has an established and defined approach to the creation of performance, and which creates both theatrical performances and theory that informs this practical work.
- The text must be professionally published and substantial, and have a minimum running time of 60 minutes. It must not be any text from the Component 3 lists and must differ to the texts selected for Component 2 in at least one of the following ways:

- time period
- theatrical convention
- thematic content, form and structure
- playwright
- social, historical and cultural context.
- A key extract is defined as a scene or moment that is significant to the text as a whole and at least 10 minutes in length when performed.

The choice of text and practitioner should be made at the beginning of the course, so that the experiences that the students have during the whole course can inform their devising work. Whilst it may not be possible to see the particular text or practitioner in action, it is worth selecting productions that share similar qualities.

2. Choosing a text

When choosing a text for the students to use as their starting point, it is key to pick something that will engage the students and that alongside the practitioner will give them a lot of opportunity for exploration. It is not necessary for you to be an expert in the text, but rather to be able to teach the students the process of analysing and exploring texts.

In order to appreciate the text content, it is vital that students understand the text context. Therefore it is worth taking time to explore the following elements and how they have shaped the work:

- themes/issues
- political
- cultural
- social
- historical.

When exploring the text, it is also worth looking in detail at the following elements, as any of them could be used as the starting point for students' devised work:

- plot
- form
- style
- genre
- structure
- character(s)
- dialogue.

Literary analysis can lead to a huge range of justifiable conclusions about a single text. Make sure the students can justify discoveries and then allow them to run with it in the devising process.

You will find a list of playwrights whose texts you could consider at the end of this guide.

3. Choosing a practitioner

In order to deliver introductory workshops for the students, the teacher must feel confident with the principles of the chosen practitioner. It may be possible in some cases for schools to have practitioners visit their schools and provide specific workshops. The key here is the introductory spirit of these workshops. They need to clearly demonstrate a way of working and methodology so that the students can continue to explore this practitioner through their devised work.

Introductory workshops should focus on:

- methodologies that lead to the creation of work
- the artistic intention
- the theatrical style and conventions used in performance
- relationship with audience.

A list of potential practitioners and a brief summary of their artistic intentions is given below. These summaries are based on the books or websites of the practitioners and draw upon their own words. However, as the summaries are just that, there are also references to key texts and websites that will provide more detail. Please note: this is not an exhaustive list, but it is intended to provide suggested options for investigating practitioners that you may not have come across before, as well as reminders of more established practitioners.

Note: Bold practitioners are those on the Component 3 list.

Practitioner	Summary of practitioner's artistic intentions
Konstantin Stanislavski (1863–1938)	The actor creates reality for an audience by 'becoming' a character. His approach went from one focused on research and analysis to physical actions. <i>Key texts by Stanislavski: An Actor Prepares, Building a Character, Creating a Role</i>
Edward Gordon Craig (1872–1966)	Theatre is an abstract world where visual elements of production collide to communicate with an audience; these are seen as superior to plot and character. Radical and tenacious, Gordon Craig was one of the most divisive but also one of the most influential practitioners. <i>Craig On Theatre</i> (ed. J. Michael Walton) <i>Edward Gordon Craig: A Vision of Theatre</i> (C. Innes)
Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874–1940)	Theatre is made up of conventions that entertain the audience and give them room to use the imagination. Meyerhold gathered the theatrical devices from his understanding of theatre history. Many of these devices are incorrectly attributed to Brecht. <i>Meyerhold on Theatre</i> (ed. E. Braun) <i>The Theatre of Meyerhold</i> (E. Braun)

Practitioner	Summary of practitioner's artistic intentions
Erwin Piscator (1893–1966)	'Less art, more politics.' Theatre should use music, dance, projections, film clips, statistics and captions to serve a revolutionary goal. <i>The Political Theatre</i> (E. Piscator) <i>The Theatre of Erwin Piscator</i> (J. Willett)
Antonin Artaud (1896–1948)	Theatre of Cruelty should remove the boundaries of a traditional theatrical performance. For example, removing the importance of understandable dialogue and established ideas of performer/audience divide. <i>The Theatre and its Double</i> (A. Artaud) <i>Artaud on Theatre</i> (C. Schumacher)
Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956)	Theatre must utilise entertainment to guide an audience from identification to detachment (<i>verfremdungseffekt</i>) in order to achieve a didactic experience. <i>Brecht on Theatre</i> (ed. J Willett)
Lee Strasberg (1901–82)	Theatre must captivate its audience by presenting actors truthfully experiencing what their characters experience. Actions on the stage should be seen to be a part of a larger reality. <i>Strasberg at the Actors Studio</i> (R. Hethmon)
Joan Littlewood (1914–2002)	Theatre must explore the detail and dynamic of everyday life through collaborative ensemble performance. Innovation is built from the aesthetic of historical theatre practice and practitioners. <i>Joan Littlewood: Dreams and Realities</i> (P. Rankin) <i>Theatre Workshop</i> (R. Leach)
Jacques LeCoq (1921–1999)	Developed an integrated system of physical theatre, movement and mime, with a specific focus on mask work, at L'École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq in Paris, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, teaching some of the leading practitioners in contemporary theatre e.g. Berkoff, Complicite, Julie Taymor. http://www.ecole-jacqueslecoq.com/en
Peter Brook (1925–)	Theatre must be built up from its simple roots through an ensemble approach with a focus on sensitive, shared awareness. Key texts by Brook: <i>The Empty Space</i> , <i>The Shifting Point</i> , <i>Threads of Time</i> , <i>The Open Door</i> <i>Peter Brook: A Theatrical Casebook</i> (ed. D. Williams)
Augusto Boal (1931–2009)	Theatre grows from the interchange between actors and spectators and aims to educate people out of oppression. This theatre can start with shared images and develop through the spirit of the forum. This theatre can also be invisible. <i>Games for Actors and Non-Actors</i> (A. Boal (trans. A. Jackson)) <i>The Rainbow of Desire</i> (A. Boal)

Practitioner	Summary of practitioner's artistic intentions
Jerzy Grotowski (1933–99)	<p>Theatre must be poor, meaning it must eradicate the unnecessary through a 'Via Negativa'. This theatre is based on contradiction and confrontation. The actor/spectator relationship should be discovered anew for each production.</p> <p><i>Towards a Poor Theatre</i> (J. Grotowski) <i>The Theatre of Grotowski</i> (J. Kumiega)</p>
Ariane Mnouchkine (1939–) and Théâtre du Soleil	<p>Theatre must be a creative collaboration leading to a performance that bridges the gap between fantasy and reality in order to politically engage its audience.</p> <p><i>Ariane Mnouchkine and the Théâtre du Soleil</i> (A. Kiernander) <i>Collaborative Theatre: The Théâtre du Soleil Sourcebook</i> (ed. D. Williams)</p>
Tadashi Suzuki (1939–)	<p>Theatre must connect old traditions with the new. Actors must discover these connections through intense, physical training. Performances are collages of text and physicality within space that is symbolic.</p> <p><i>Culture is the Body: The Theatre Writings of Tadashi Suzuki</i> (T. Suzuki, trans. K. Steele) <i>The Way of Acting: The Theatre Writings of Tadashi Suzuki</i> (T. Suzuki, trans. J.T. Rimer)</p>
Elizabeth LeCompte (1944–) The Wooster Group (1975–)	<p>Theatre is a forever developing aesthetic that must respond to media innovations. The biographies of the ensemble are essential inspirations. Texts are not sacred and they are used to facilitate the group and the aesthetic.</p> <p><i>Breaking the Rules: Wooster Group</i> (D. Savran) <i>The Wooster Group Work Book</i> (A. Quick)</p>
Declan Donnellan (1953–) Cheek by Jowl (1981–)	<p>Theatre must focus on clarity of text delivery with a space designed to be free from meaningless excess. The director is a trainer, guiding actors to remove blocks and discover targets for every moment of the play.</p> <p><i>The Actor and the Target</i> (D. Donnellan)</p>
Pina Bausch (1940–2009) Tanztheater Wuppertal (1973–)	<p>Theatre must remain optimistic in the face of brutality. Extreme and often brutal movement is used to challenge the audience. The everyday collides with poetic extension and repetition. The ensemble devises ever-shifting perspectives on human relationships.</p> <p><i>The Pina Bausch Sourcebook: The Making of Tanztheater</i> (ed. R. Climenhaga)</p>
Robert Lepage (1957–) Ex Machina (1994–)	<p>Theatre is a laboratory for a multidisciplinary company where the performing arts mix with the recorded arts. The theatre should transcend boundaries and utilise today's audiences' ability to interpret the visual.</p> <p><i>Ex Machina: Creating for the Stage</i> (P. Caux and B. Gilbert, trans. N. Kroetsch) <i>The Visual Laboratory of Robert Lepage</i> (L. Fouquet)</p>

Practitioner	Summary of practitioner's artistic intentions
<p>Simon McBurney (1957–)</p> <p>Complicité (1983–)</p>	<p>Theatre should not be driven by a single method. Instead collaboration should be the seedbed for new ideas to flourish. The actor must free their imagination and bodies in order to unlock the playful imagination of their audience.</p> <p>www.complicite.org</p> <p><i>Devising Notes for Teachers</i> found at: www.complicite.org/resources.php</p>
<p>Mike Alfreds (1934–)</p>	<p>Theatre is where an audience shares in an act of imagination. The external elements of theatre must not intrude on the actor/audience relationship; in this way the imagination can be fully engaged. The theatre must be different to other technological media: it must be three-dimensional, dangerous, intimate, interactive, ephemeral, transcendent and human.</p> <p><i>Different Every Night: Freeing the Actor</i> (M. Alfreds)</p> <p><i>Then What Happens? Storytelling and Adapting for the Theatre</i> (M. Alfreds)</p>
<p>Steven Berkoff (1937–)</p>	<p>The theatre must embrace the expressionist theatricality of the body and voice. Mime, stylised movement and exaggerated voice are used to create an atmosphere for the text to thrive.</p> <p>Key texts by Berkoff: <i>I am Hamlet</i>, <i>Coriolanus in Deutschland</i>, <i>Meditations on Metamorphosis</i></p> <p>Useful academic essays available at: jainfisher.com/berkoff</p>
<p>Kneehigh (1980–)</p>	<p>Theatre must change and adapt to each project. The ensemble must approach work with a new sense of community and identity each time. There must be generosity, passion, bravery, humility, ambition, instinct and irreverence. A stage environment has to be designed at the early stage of creation to provide the performers with their playground.</p> <p><i>Kneehigh: The Book</i> (Kneehigh)</p> <p>www.kneehigh.co.uk</p>
<p>DV8 (1986–)</p>	<p>The theatre must give a voice to unheard and complex stories and ideas. Dance-like movement is used to capture and enhance the rhythms of language, dialogue and narrative. There is a strong commitment to film and video and how the combination with dance can enhance one another and reach a crossover audience.</p> <p>www.dv8.co.uk</p>
<p>Punchdrunk (2000–)</p>	<p>Theatre must focus as much on the audience and the performance space as on the performers and narrative. Abandoned buildings are occupied with cinematic design. The lines between space, performer, and spectator are blurred, leaving the audience free to choose their own individual, imaginative journey.</p> <p>http://punchdrunk.com</p>

Practitioner	Summary of practitioner's artistic intentions
Katie Mitchell (1964–)	<p>Theatre should always be an experimentation of form. The director's interpretation takes priority over the writer's intention. Live-recorded and pre-recorded cinematic film projections can be used in conjunction with performers on the stage. The work of the actor is to replicate emotion precisely so that the audience feel them. The physiology of emotions is primary.</p> <p><i>The Director's Craft: A Handbook for the Theatre</i> (K. Mitchell) is not indicative of her style necessarily but provides the core principals and underlying methodologies.</p>
Frantic Assembly (1994–)	<p>Theatre is physical and grows out of the development of limitations. An idea leads to a text that leads to a space that leads to a movement. Limitations create freedoms and breed creativity. Performers thrive when their imaginative and creative input is shaped by an outside eye. Performance must be a product of experimentation between text, movement and space. Movement finds meaning in context.</p> <p><i>The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre</i> (S. Graham and S. Hoggett)</p>
Forced Entertainment (1984–)	<p>Theatre must continually be reinvented to speak about the times we are living in. Theatre needs to be live. It must be a conversation or a negotiation. The experience of confusion excites, challenges, entertains, raises questions, makes us laugh and cry. Theatre must experiment with different media and communication in order to discover what makes theatre a distinct and live medium. Time together is essential for innovative creativity.</p> <p>www.forcedentertainment.com</p>
Improbable (1996–)	<p>The Improbable ethos is to create performance work that mixes improvisation, comedy, puppetry and storytelling in an 'unfinished' performance, and the audience will play integral part in its creation and completion.</p> <p>http://www.improbable.co.uk/</p>
Shunt (1998–)	<p>Theatre must immerse its audience in site-specific constructs. The notion of the live event is explored by performers and audiences. Once a theme or subject is agreed, the group contribute individual ideas for moments. These are then pieced together as a collage in a chosen space.</p> <p>www.shunt.co.uk</p>
Gecko (2000–)	<p>Theatre must be visual, visceral and ambitious. It must be incredibly detailed and crafted, highly skilful and universal, creating both a childlike wonder and an artisan appreciation in its audience. Choreography, writing, storyboarding and reflection lead to the creation of work in parallel with the sound and visual design elements.</p> <p>www.geckotheatre.com</p>

Practitioner	Summary of practitioner's artistic intentions
Tim Crouch Theatre Karl James and a smith (2003-)	Theatre starts from a text. This is rooted in a self-generated impulse to tell a story or explore a form. Performances must challenge the audience and performers. The performance challenges notions of acting, spectating, space, communication, text, form or a combination of these. www.timcrouchtheatre.co.uk
Slunglow (2006-)	Theatre must be an adventure for its audience outside of conventional theatre spaces. Powerful and moving stories must be at the heart of the adventure. Audiences should be transported to new places and see familiar places from new perspectives. www.slunglow.org
Dickie Beau (2011-)	Theatre must loot a range of performance traditions from 'low culture' to 'high art'. 'Playback' performance (the uncanny embodiment of found sound) positions the body as an archive, re-visioning and playing back voices from the margins. The use of clowning, theatre, vaudeville, dance and mime as well as original video and sound places performances at the edge of convention. www.dickiebeau.com

4. Initial exploration of the text

The huge number of texts and the range of practitioners available create infinite opportunities for devising. The methods and final performance will reflect each centre's choices of text and practitioner. No guide could give an appropriate summary of all these variables. However, unlocking the text and making it ready for investigation through a practitioner's ideas will be a challenge of practical literary investigation.

Below is a collection of exercises that you can try, with suggested links to how the outcomes may connect with performance choices. These connections are in no way prescriptive, as the combinations and interpretations are truly unlimited.

- Form
- Structure
- Character
- Dialogue
- Themes/issues and ideas

4.1 Initial reading

Read the words aloud as a group. Each person reads a sentence/line/ thought instead of particular characters. Sit in a circle of chairs with one empty seat. Give the group an order and then mix up where people are sitting. Number 1 reads the first line whilst moving across the circle to the empty seat. They speak only as they are moving, therefore pace must be adjusted. Number 2 then picks off where 1 left off and so on. Students

should then discuss and note their initial responses. This method distances them from a 'traditional' approach and allows them to hear the text differently. This could lead to lines or sections that trigger devising.

4.2 Form

Word sounds

Stand in a circle and read one word each. The students should exaggerate the consonant and vowel sounds but retain meaning. Students should aim for a flow from one word to the next. Discuss which sounds stood out and what the sounds suggest. These common sounds could lead to new, similar sounding words being selected or a new language being created for performance. The sounds could be represented with particular movement qualities: pace, direction, size, control and orientation.

Contrasts

In pairs, identify as many contrasts in the text as possible. Keep this quick and instinctive. The pairs then lead two groups in creating tableaux based on the contrasting words. These tableaux are performed opposite each other. The students must then decide on the resolution of these opposites: for example, love and hate could be harmony or it could be death. The two groups unite to create one tableau based on the chosen resolution word. They could then work out an appropriate way of moving from the two contrasting tableaux to a merged resolution tableau. Performance ideas, story or narrative could begin with the discovered journey from contrast to resolution. The qualities of movement discovered could form the basis for a complex and conflicting character.

Rhythm

Get the students to walk in the space with purpose, reading aloud the section of the text they have been given (this can be a line or a paragraph, whatever you feel will work best). They must make a definite change of direction on every punctuation mark. This will get the students physicalising the rhythms in the text. Lots of changes of direction or few changes will give a shape to the performance. Ask students to identify moments that stand out and discuss the reasons why this may link to the meaning of the text. Ask students to create a performance of the stand out moments, exaggerating the pace and rhythm they identified. Perform the resulting work in order and discuss impressions. These extremes of rhythm could inform absurd style and language choices in the final performance.

Verse rhythm

Explore the metre physically. Ask the students to trot (like a child being a horse) out the metre. They must stop and change direction at the end of each line. The iambic pentameter would be: di-DUM, di-DUM, di-DUM, di-DUM, di-DUM (change direction). They must recognise where it is difficult to keep the rhythm because of irregularities in the text. It is the irregularities that reinforce a line on a subconscious level for the audience and therefore these lines contribute heavily to the meaning communicated. These discoveries could trigger further improvisations. Likewise, the overall, forward movement of the rhythm could trigger ideas for performance structures. Nonsense speech could be used in the same rhythm to isolate the rhythm from the text further.

Images

Groups should identify the imagery in the text's similes and metaphors. These can then be used as a title for improvisations.

Crescendo and climax

Ask the group to identify the most pronounced crescendo and climax in the text. Ask the students to find a space in the room. They should then begin to speak this moment of text in chorus. As they speak the text they should move continuously, being drawn ever closer to the centre of the room. They can increase the volume as they get closer to the centre. Maximum volume and the occupation of the centre of the room should only come with the climax. They should speak in chorus but jostle and compete for the centre spot. Discuss the journey through crescendo to climax. Ask students to share moments that stood out; for instance, maybe something did not fit. Get them to consider: Why is this moment a climax? How might your practitioner want to manage climaxes: draw the audience in or subvert them?

4.3 Structure

Story/plot/narrative

Split the class into three groups or repeat this exercise thrice with one smaller group.

- The *first group* must create a series of tableaux portraying the **story** – this is the chronological sequence of every event, even those that occur between what is in the text. They can include lines and phrases to accompany each tableau and develop appropriate transitions.
- The *second group* must create a series of tableaux portraying the **plot** – these are the selected, important events it is necessary to communicate to the audience. Again, they can use lines or phrases and transitions.
- The *third group* must create a series of tableaux that portray the **narrative** – this is the way the plot is presented to an audience, i.e. flashbacks, episodic, binary opposites, split stage. This group can layer and overlap tableaux, as well as selecting lines or phrase and creating transitions.

The three different takes on the same text can then be presented and discussed. Similarities and differences should be explored to reveal the complexity of the text and potential connotations of how it is presented. This could lead to the group choosing to suggest themes and ideas through the story/plot/narrative of their devising performance.

4.4 Character

Perspective

This exercise will benefit from using all the characters from the play, not just those in a chosen extract. The group must decide how each character perceives the extract moment and then create different versions of the extract, as if each different character is the director. Exaggeration should be used to emphasise the chosen character's perception of events. This could lead to one character's perspective becoming of particular interest, and

further expressionist style scenes could be devised if an appropriate practitioner is selected.

Backstory

Groups should select a character and improvise their backstory. They should select significant life moments that have led them to being in this time and place. Perform and discuss similarities and differences between the different character's stories. Did a particular backstory lead to a particular choice of style? Was one character's story particularly compelling? This could lead to a naturalistic/realistic exploration of a character's psychology, but equally could form one strand of an unfinished story in a work inspired by a post dramatic practitioner.

Emotion and action

Using transitive verbs, (also known as Actioning, as popularised by the theatre director Max Stafford-Clark) to indicate action for every line of the extract. This is a technique advocated by many directors, including Katie Mitchell and Mike Alfreds.

Assign each student a character and ask him or her to create a physical movement for each action. This does not need to be literal but an abstract representation that has personal relevance for the individual. Run the extract through these physical actions, improvising reactions to the physical movements of others. This movement sequence can be repeated and perfected. Another group of students should do the same task but instead of actions they will assign emotions from Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions to every line and create the physical manifestation of the chosen emotions. The two perfected movement sequences should then be performed in parallel to one another as the text is read from the side. The viewers can then identify contrasts and similarities between the action movement, the emotion movement and the spoken word. These contrasts will illuminate complexity of character and trigger debates about how the character communicates.

The movements created could be used as a framework for physical theatre or could be the beginnings of characters and relationships in naturalistic or absurdist scenes. Furthermore, the discoveries could be presented in different media to examine the realities of existence in the Internet age.

4.5 Dialogue

Pauses

Complete an active reading of the extract but ask the performers to exaggerate and extend pauses. Discuss where particular tensions lay. Repeat, but this time ask another student to fill the pauses by expressing the character's thoughts, showing awareness of the tensions discussed. This could lead to absurdist inventions of dialogue or *verfremdungseffekt*-style performance.

Third person narration

Each character begins their lines with 'he said' or 'she said'. What does this distancing reveal about the choice of words? This could lead to a piece exploring how words are chosen.

Verbalised actions

Each character speaks the action allocated to a line before speaking the line. This can reveal the competition and conflict that lies beneath dialogue. This conflict could be the starting point for improvisations or tableaux.

Eye contact

Ask students to speak a dialogue, with one character attempting to hold eye contact whilst the other avoids it. Alternatively, lock eye contact as you move through the space. This method has been used as the beginning of a physical theatre sequence by DV8.

Relationship stick

Two characters in the dialogue hold a stick about a metre long between their index fingers. They must move towards or away from the other character as they see fit whilst keeping the stick from falling. The moment the stick falls or it becomes particularly difficult to hold it deserves further investigation. How do these characters collaborate in the words together? This could lead to a detailed exploration of particular relationships.

Restricted movement

Two characters speak the words facing each other whilst being held back by the rest of the group. They must fight against the restrictions as they speak and listen. The words will become weapons in the struggle and the sounds will come to life. This could be used as the foundation for work with an aurally focussed practitioner.

Change the space

Perform the dialogue but use a different size space each time. How do the characters make themselves heard and understood? This could lead to different lines having emphasis and being the stimuli for the next stage of devising.

4.6 Themes, issues and ideas

- Identify recurring words and investigate these words. What do they mean? How do they sound? Do they point to a scene? Create an improvisation where these are the only words that can be used.
- Create a slogan to represent each character. Improvise scenes with these slogans as titles. Is there a political or social idea beneath the text?
- List the locations in the extract and the whole play. What do these locations connote? Can these be created through soundscape or actor as object? Improvise other things that might happen in this location. Find a map of this place and create a piece of movement in response to the lines and shapes in the map.
- Has your text been adapted into other media forms? What are the similarities and differences in presentation? Can you recreate these different forms of presentation in live theatre performance?
- What period of time is covered in the extract? What do the students think is significant about the length of time? Recreate the events of the text but expand or contract time.

5. Advice for devisers and teachers

5.1 Advice for devisers

Understand the rules that govern the text. Bend them and do the opposite of what it creates. Understand the rules that govern the work of your chosen practitioner – expand and shape them to your own ends. Always be in a position to justify your detours through an extensive knowledge of the practitioner and the text. Keep detailed records: notes, drawings, collages, film and audio can all be brought together to present the portfolio of your journey.

5.2 Advice for teachers

Be adventurous in your choice of text and practitioner. Exploring the new and unknown can lead to interesting work and get students excited about what will be an extended period of working.

If you choose a practitioner that is currently working, do try and see their work. If this is not possible, visit their website, watch videos of their work and find interviews that reveal more detail of their process and style. Lots of these practitioners offer educational workshops that can enhance understanding and enthuse students.

The range of possible texts and the even larger possibilities of extracts combined with original literary interpretations will lead to endlessly possible pathways. Combine this with the further variable of a practitioner and the devising options are truly boundless. Facilitate this process to ensure that students produce work that allows them to access the full range of marks.

6. Playwrights to consider

Below is a list of playwrights that could help guide your selection.

Adamson, Samuel	Bano, Alia
Adetunji, Lydia	Barker, Howard
Aeschylus	Barnes, Peter
Agbaje, Bola	Barrie, J.M.
Aguire, Carmen	Bartlett, Mike
Albee, Edward	Bean, Richard
Alrawi, Karim	Beaumont and Fletcher
Anderson and Stallings	Beckett, Samuel
Anouilh, Jean	Bennett, Alan
Arden, John	Berkoff, Steven
Aristophanes	Bhalti, Gurpreet Kaur
Artaud, Antonin	Blythe, Alecky
Auden, W.H.	Bond, Edward
Ayckbourn, Alan	Boothe Luce, Clare
Baker, Annie	Brace, Adam

Brecht, Bertolt
Brenton, Howard
Buchner, Georg
Buffini, Moira
Bullmore, Amelia
Burke, Gregory
Butterworth, Jez
Calderón de la Barca, Pedro
Caldwell, Lucy
Camus, Albert
Carpenter, Bridget
Carr, Marina
Cartwright, Jim
Chekhov, Anton
Cho, Julia
Churchill, Caryl
Clements, Marie
Cocteau, Jean
Coghlan, Lin
Coles, Jane
Congreve, William
Coward, Noel
Crimp, Martin
Crouch, Tim
De Angelis, April
De Vega, Lope
Deavere Smith, Anna
Delaney, Shelagh
Devlin, Anne
Dhondy, Farrukh
Duffy, Carol Ann
Dunn, Nell
Durrenmatt, Friedrich
Edgar, David
Edmundson, Helen
Edson, Margaret
Eldridge, David
Eliot, T.S.
Ellis, Ben
Etherege, George
Euripides
Farber, Yael
Feehily, Sheila
Fo, Dario
Foot-Newton, Lara
Fornés, Maria Irene
Frame, Ronald
Frayn, Michael
Friel, Brian
Fry, C.
Fuller, Charles
Gallagher, Mary
Gannon, Lucy
Gee, Shirley
Genet, Jean
Gogol, Nikolai
Goldberg, Jessica
Goldini, Carlo
Gregg, Stacey
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Gupta, Tanka
Haley, Jennifer
Hall, Katori
Hamilton, Patrick
Handke, Peter
Hansberry, Lorraine
Hare, David
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Hellman, Lillian
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Ionesco, Eugene
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Kesselman, Wendy Ann
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Kron, Lisa
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Lenkiewicz, Rebecca
Letts, Tracey
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Mansour, Mana
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