

Edexcel GCSE Drama

Unit 3: Drama Performance

Example work 2013 - 2014

Overview

This commentary should be read in conjunction with the recording of the performance, which can be accessed here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sjewFSqGyE>

Please note: this recording is accessed via YouTube.

We would like to thank the teachers and students of Backwell School who have granted permission for this work to be used as example material.

NB the performance used in this example has been recorded for this purpose and is not the original performance as seen by the examiners.

If you would like to share examples of your students' work for units 1, 2 or 3, please contact Paul Webster by emailing TeachingPerformingArts@Pearson.com.

In order to use any work, we will need permission from all students involved (using the consent form at the end of this document) and a good quality recording.

Option A: Devised Performance

"The Lost Children"

Centre Documentation

How the performance meets the Assignment Brief

The audience will want to watch this performance because it uses a range of styles to tell the story of Florence. The performance encourages the audience to think about the politics of immigration and how best to support vulnerable children.

The context of the performance

After WW2 the British Government devised a plan to unburden 'overflowing' children's homes. Children were shipped to Australia 'to be adopted by loving families' only to find they were used as cheap labour.

The 'Lost Children' follows the story of a young girl who is sent to Australia and required to work on a farm.

Performance outline

- 1 Mother has to give Florence away as she can no longer afford to look after her. Wilfred (younger brother) gives her his Teddy Bear.
- 2 In the orphanage the children are told they are going on a trip to Australia.
- 3 They begin their trip by going on an open top bus, train and then the boat.
- 4 On the boat the children play a game and Maud is introduced.
- 5 They arrive in Australia and have to choose either town or country.

6 Florence chooses country and is working on a farm. We find out how she is treated.

7 Maud sends her a letter and visits.

8 She moves to town with Maud and is introduced to her friends.

9 She goes on her first date. Still images/pictures – proposal, marriage, family.

10 She decides to find her brother.

11 Tells Adam (her husband) about her past and leaves for England.

13 Wilfred and Florence are reunited.

Visiting Examiner's comments on the examination performance

This was a highly engaging performance with some very sensitive and empathetic performances.

The stronger performers supported the others throughout.

The ensemble work and choral speaking were very well rehearsed and well considered. Freezes were held to good effect.

The space was used well for example to create moments of intimacy and time passing.

The audience of other year 11 GCSE Drama students were engaged throughout as were the examiners.

NB The examination performance was an accompanied visit to the centre for the 3rd session in a total of 4 sessions.

Commentary on the Overall Performance

This was a very well prepared and rehearsed devised performance that enabled all students to meet the requirements of Unit 3.

There was a range of achievement in the 5 students but all contributed to the piece and it was notable that the stronger performers supported the others who tended to work mainly in the ensemble sections.

The timing of around 25 minutes met the requirements of Unit 3 but also allowed enough time for all students to be seen in performance without any sense that any material was included that was not essential for both the narrative and performance style.

The simple setting of just one rostrum was used inventively and enabled the complete performance to flow seamlessly.

The changes of location and time were clear to the audience through the text and the ensemble work, for example the arriving in London through to the arrival in Australia.

This supported all students in achievement in marks for communication both as members of the ensemble and to the audience and examiner(s).

The single 'prop' of a Teddy Bear was used to great effect throughout the performance.

All 5 students could be clearly identified by the different coloured tops they wore. In this performance there were also clear differences in stature and hair colour and style.

It is vital that all students can be clearly identified in all examination performances. This is particularly true for work that has multi roles or has ensemble sequences.

The performance was very well structured to enable not only the strong narrative to be told but also to enable all students to be seen as individuals by the examiner. The use of audience address and more naturalistic duologues, sometimes counter pointed by choral speaking or group movement sequences was most effective in supporting the students in achievement against the criteria.

The choice and number of roles had been carefully considered by the centre. Students achieved in this form of devised work for Unit 3 by:

- a) Having one role and sustaining/developing it throughout the performance (Florence)
- b) Having one main role a second less key role and working in the ensemble (Maud/ Mother)
- c) Having several key roles (Shaun/Adam etc or Wilfred/Farmer etc) and working in the ensemble
- d) Working mainly in the ensemble where they can be supported by other students.

It was noticeable that in the ensemble work thought and preparation had been given to making even brief moments/roles well differentiated.

It was evident that the centre had provided a well chosen stimulus for the group that had then been well researched into the lives of real people involved in the Child Migrant scheme. This supported all students in being able to demonstrate in performance a high level of understanding of the chosen content of the performance.

Detailed scene breakdown to support the recorded performance

- 1 At home in England Mrs Alf sings a lullaby to her 2 sleeping children, Wilfred (older brother) and Florence (younger sister). Mother's audience address. 2 men from the authorities arrive to collect Florence. Wilfred gives her his teddy bear. Ensemble speak the letter.
- 2 Orphanage in England. Florence is told of her mother's death. Ensemble of children in orphanage. 'Trip' is announced. Ensemble bus tour of London/travelling on the train.
- 3 Ensemble of children on boat to Australia. Death of Billy. Florence's audience address. Maud and Florence become friends.
- 4 Ensemble of arrival in Australia. Children given choice of town or country. Florence chooses the country.
- 5 Florence on the farm. Farmer's wife gives her orders to work. Duologue with Shaun (farmer's son).
- 6 A letter arrives from Maud and she visits Florence. Farmer has audience address regarding Florence. Florence and her teddy bear leave with Maud.
- 7 Ensemble Florence meets Maud's friends (Pam/Micheal/Adam). Florence and Adam duologue. Adam upsets Florence by mentioning her mother. He asks Florence on a date.
- 8 Florence and Adam go to the cinema. Ensemble react to the film and Florence and Adam.
- 9 Sydney Harbour. Adam proposes. Ensemble of still images to show wedding/marriage/family.
- 10 Cross cutting to show Florence and Wilfred still think of each other. Ensemble as Florence contacts Child Migrant Trust. Florence's family react to news that Wilfred has been 'found'.
- 11 Florence narrates the story of her past; ensemble support the narrative.
- 12 Florence travels to England and is reunited with Wilfred. 'Family'.

Student Identification in order of introduction

Student A

Female. White loose short sleeved T shirt. Fair hair in high ponytail.
Roles: Mrs Alf, Florence's mother/Maud, Florence's friend/ensemble.

Student B

Male. Yellow short sleeved t-shirt and white long sleeved top.
Dark hair in deep fringe.
Roles: Man from the authorities/Billy/Shawn, farmers son/Adam
Florence's husband/ensemble.

Student C

Female. Mauve sweatshirt with logo. Petite blonde hair in ponytail.
Role: Florence Alf

Student D

Male. Check shirt Fair short hair. Taller of 2 boys.
Roles: Wilfred, Florence's brother/manager of orphanage/Farmer in
Australia/ Michael, Maud's friend/ensemble.

Student E

Female. Dark blue sweatshirt. Fair hair.
Roles: Man from authority/farmer's wife/Pam, Maud's friend/woman,
from Child Migrant Trust.

Commentary on student achievement in performance

All students are assessed as individuals.

Student C: Florence

The student was awarded marks towards the top of Level 1 for all criteria.

Vocal and Movement

Sensitive and highly effective use of wide range of vocal skills throughout.

Final 'family' was very well delivered.

Movement demonstrated thoughtful and precise use of both space and gesture throughout. Facial expression particularly strong.

Roles and Characterisation

Highly focussed and detailed throughout. Took Florence on the 'journey' of her life. Convinced as both child and adult.

Embodied the role of Florence. A consistent and very well considered character development.

Communication

Strong emotions were communicated with maturity and sensitivity.

Created high level of empathy with audience throughout. Audience address was confident with eye contact sustained at a high level.

Complete focus within ensemble throughout the performance

Content/Style/Form

High level of understanding of the content throughout showing empathy at all times.

Fully understood the range of forms used throughout to create a highly engaging performance.

Student D Wilfred - Florence's brother

The student was awarded marks towards the top of Level 1 for all criteria.

Vocal and Movement

Very high level of vocal clarity in all roles which were well differentiated showing wide range of vocal skills.
Movement particularly gesture was used with a high level of energy and commitment. Facial expression was very strong throughout.

Roles and Characterisation

Highly convincing in all named roles and also in the ensemble work. Well thought through and prepared to show this range. Wilfred was highly convincing as both child and adult. A very strong ensemble player who communicated location/time/emotion as well as character. Used humour well to counterpoint the more sensitive moments.

Communication

Worked with audience at a very high level particularly in the confident use of audience address both vocally and with eye contact. Complete focus with the ensemble throughout.

Content/Style/Form

High level of understanding of the content throughout showing empathy at all times. Fully understood the range of forms used throughout to create a highly engaging performance. Was a driving force in ensemble sections

Student B: Adam - Florence's husband

The student was awarded marks towards the top of Level 1 for all criteria.

Vocal and Movement

Very high level of vocal clarity in all roles which were well differentiated showing wide range of vocal skills.

Movement particularly gesture was used with a high level of energy and commitment.

Performance skills were used with a high level of maturity and sensitivity in the range of roles played.

Roles and Characterisation

Highly convincing in all named roles and also in the ensemble work. Well thought through and prepared to show this range.

Adam was highly convincing as firstly awkward boyfriend and then loving husband and father. Shaun was a real contrast.

A very strong ensemble player who communicated location/time/emotion as well as character. Confident in the more sensitive moments.

Communication

Communicated with audience at a very high level by being highly focussed in all dialogue.

Complete focus with the ensemble throughout.

Content/Style/Form

High level of understanding of the content throughout showing empathy at all times and through a wide range of roles, characterisations.

Fully understood the range of forms used throughout to create a highly engaging performance.

Worked with complete commitment in all ensemble sections

Student A: Maud/Mother

The student was awarded marks towards the top of Level 3 but with Communication/Content/Style/Form awarded at the lower end of Level 2.

Vocal and Movement

Overall vocal skills were stronger. Reasonable range of vocal skills were used but somewhat on a similar level. Gestures were well considered and facial expression was a strength.

Roles and Characterisation

Stronger as Maud.

The characterisation was sustained but somewhat lacking in development.

Communication

Worked consistently well in the ensemble. Less confident in direct address to audience.

Content/Style/Form

Secure understanding of the content throughout. Confident in using the range of forms seen in performance.

Student E: Farmer's wife/Ensemble

The student was awarded marks towards the top of Level 4

Vocal and Movement

Both vocal and movements skills were lacking in confidence. Vocal skills were used but on a similar level. Gestures/moves were often in reaction to others in the ensemble. Facial expression was lacking conviction.

Roles and Characterisation

All roles were seen as part of the ensemble and lacked development and contrast. Sense that student was following the lead of others in the ensemble.

Communication

This was inconsistent and at times the student was watching others in the ensemble. Lacked confidence in engaging the audience. For example in making eye contact.

Content/Style/Form

Showed some understanding of the content. Less so in using the forms chosen to be used in the performance.

Notes on the Commentary

These notes give a summative response to the overall achievement in each assessment criteria for all students.

When using the recording centres are reminded that examiners award marks only on the live performance and do not view the recordings to confirm marks.

The recordings are used by Edexcel to support monitoring procedures and provide materials for the awarding meetings and the following year's standardisation for all examiners.

General commentary on Unit 3

Unit 3 is worth 40% of the total marks for Drama GCSE. Therefore examiners expect to see work that not only meets the requirements of this unit as detailed in the specification and Assessment Support Guide but reflects that 40% of a two year GCSE course has been spent in preparation for this final examination.

During the Programme of Study it is expected that all students will be given the opportunity to become confident and skilled performers. There should be time spent in teaching the medium and elements of drama as well as how the strategies can be used in the preparation period for the final exam performance.

It was clear that these students understood and could select and use in performance from a wide range of theatre forms/styles. These were used with confidence and sensitivity throughout.

DRAMA EXEMPLAR MATERIAL**CONSENT DECLARATION**

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Subject & Level	
Unit No. and Title	
Candidate Name	

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Please return completed form to:

Drama Assessment Team, Fifth Floor, Edexcel, 190 High Holborn, London WC1V 7BH.