



BLACKMINSTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Community – Aspiration – Respect – Excellence

Drama Curriculum Overview

At Blackminster Middle School, Drama provides all pupils with opportunities to develop confidence, creativity, communication and collaboration through practical and engaging learning experiences. Through a carefully sequenced curriculum, students explore dramatic techniques, performance skills and storytelling whilst developing essential life skills such as resilience, empathy, problem-solving and self-expression. Our curriculum enables pupils to understand how drama reflects human experiences, cultures, literature and contemporary issues.

The curriculum is designed to build progressively from Year 6 to Year 8. Pupils begin by learning the foundations of drama through practical exploration of key conventions, before applying these skills to increasingly complex themes, texts and performance styles. Students develop cultural awareness, literary understanding and the ability to communicate ideas effectively to different audiences.

Drama supports our wider curriculum by developing spoken language, critical thinking and emotional literacy. It encourages pupils to work respectfully with others, take creative risks and reflect on their own development as performers and learners. Through performance and evaluation, students learn that success comes through commitment, rehearsal and resilience.

Drama is delivered through practical, collaborative and inclusive lessons which encourage all pupils to participate actively. Learning is structured around three key strands:

- Developing performance skills
- Exploring dramatic conventions and techniques
- Creating, rehearsing and evaluating drama

These strands are revisited and strengthened throughout each year group.

Students are increasingly expected to take responsibility for planning, rehearsing and refining their work, preparing them for further study at high school.

Across all year groups, pupils regularly:

- Work collaboratively within an ensemble
- Perform to peers and audiences
- Give and receive constructive feedback
- Develop confidence in speaking and presenting
- Reflect on strengths and next steps in learning

Assessment is ongoing through teacher observation, practical performance, peer assessment and self-reflection, with performance outcomes providing evidence of progress in both substantive knowledge and disciplinary skills

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 6	Introduction to drama		Ancient Greece		Resilience	
Key Substantive Knowledge: What will students learn?						
Year 6	Drama studio expectations and conventions Rules and routines for working safely and effectively in a drama space. Appropriate behaviour when rehearsing and performing. The purpose and features of tableaux What a tableau (freeze frame) is. How still images communicate ideas,		Ancient Greeks used myths and legends to explain natural events, human behaviour and religious beliefs. The Ancient Greeks believed in many gods and goddesses who had different powers and responsibilities. Theatre originated in Ancient Greece and was an important part of Greek culture. The story and themes of Theseus and the Minotaur.		Resilience is the ability to recover from setbacks, difficulties and challenges. Everyone experiences setbacks and mistakes. Mistakes can be valuable learning opportunities. Positive self-talk can help build confidence and perseverance. Challenges can be overcome through effort, support and problem-solving.	

	emotions, characters and situations. Physical theatre techniques How body shape, posture, movement and gesture create character. How status can be communicated physically through body language. Vocal skills in drama The meaning and importance of: Projection Articulation Pitch Tone How vocal choices affect audience understanding. Improvisation conventions The principles of improvisation, including accepting and building on ideas ("Yes, and..."). The importance of collaboration in creating drama. Performance and devising How a short performance is created through rehearsal and refinement. The role of evaluation in improving dramatic work.		The story and moral message of Pandora's Box. The story of Perseus and Medusa. The roles and characteristics of key Olympian gods including Zeus, Athena, Poseidon, Hades and Aphrodite. Heroism and bravery. Power and leadership. Temptation and consequences. Good versus evil. Hope, resilience and perseverance. The purpose of a freeze frame (tableau). The purpose of narration in storytelling. The role of a chorus in Ancient Greek theatre. How voice, movement and facial expression communicate character and emotion.		Different people may respond differently to the same challenge. Relationships and support networks can strengthen resilience. Asking for help is a sign of strength rather than weakness. Emotions influence how people respond to difficult situations. Resilient people use strategies to manage challenges effectively. A freeze frame is a still image used to communicate ideas, relationships and emotions. Conscience alley is a drama technique used to explore a character's thoughts and choices. Improvisation involves creating action and dialogue without a script. Role-on-the-wall helps develop character understanding by exploring thoughts, feelings and influences. Forum theatre allows audiences to suggest alternative actions and outcomes.	
Disciplinary Knowledge (Key skills)						
Year 6	Create and perform tableaux Use stillness, levels, facial expressions and body position to communicate meaning. Develop character through physicality		Use freeze frames to represent significant moments in a narrative. Develop characters through movement, posture, voice and facial expression.		Use freeze frames to communicate a narrative and emotions. Improvise characters and situations based on a given stimulus. Create believable responses to	

	Alter movement, posture and gesture to portray different characters and status relationships. Apply vocal techniques Use projection, articulation, pitch and tone effectively in performance Improvise collaboratively Respond to others' ideas. Sustain improvised scenes. Work constructively within a group. Devise original drama Generate ideas, rehearse and combine dramatic techniques into a coherent performance. Evaluate performance Give and receive peer feedback. Reflect on strengths and areas for improvement in their own and others' work.		Use improvisation to explore situations and relationships. Use physical theatre techniques to communicate meaning. Sustain a role during performance and improvisation. Adapt voice, volume, pace and tone for different characters. Work collaboratively as part of an ensemble. Perform confidently for an audience. Reflect on their own performances and those of others. Identify effective drama techniques used in performances. Use appropriate drama vocabulary when discussing work. Explain how dramatic choices help communicate meaning to an audience. Recognise features of Ancient Greek theatre. Understand how myths can be adapted for performance. Appreciate how stories can be communicated through movement, narration and ensemble work		challenging situations. Develop and sustain a role during dramatic activities. Select appropriate drama techniques to communicate ideas about resilience. Collaboratively devise and structure a short performance. Use voice, movement and facial expression to portray emotions and character. Present drama confidently to an audience. Demonstrate how characters change and develop through overcoming challenges. Communicate a clear message through performance. Reflect on the effectiveness of dramatic performances. Discuss how drama techniques influence audience understanding. Evaluate characters' choices and decisions. Offer constructive feedback to peers. Make links between drama scenarios and real-life experiences.	
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National Curriculum links to topic

National Curriculum
Links to topic
Aims:

Before studying this Year 6 unit, pupils are likely to have experience of:

Spoken Language

- Participating in formal presentations and performances.
- Building on others' ideas in discussion.
- Adapting language to suit audience and purpose.
- Explaining and defending viewpoints.

Drama-related Learning

- Creating and sustaining believable characters. - Improvising and devising short scenes. - Rehearsing and refining performances. - Interpreting emotions, motives and relationships. - Evaluating their own and others' performances						
Key vocabulary	Drama, Tableau, Freeze Frame, Character, Physicality, Body Language, Gesture, Facial Expression, Status, Projection, Articulation, Pitch, Tone, Improvisation, Collaboration, Devising, Rehearsal, Performance, Audience, Evaluation, Feedback		Myth, Olympian, Hero, Quest, Labyrinth, Characterisation, Improvisation, Freeze Frame, Thought Tracking, Narrator, Chorus, Physical Theatre, Ensemble, Consequence, Perseverance.		Character Role Improvisation Freeze Frame Conscience Alley Role-on-the-Wall Forum Theatre Audience Performance	
Assessment checkpoint and evidence of learning	AFL for monitoring of Participation and teamwork. Use of drama conventions. Ability to communicate themes and messages. Reflection and evaluation.		A short class showcase of Ancient Greek myths using narration, tableau, improvisation and chorus techniques inspired by Ancient Greek theatre. AFL to monitor: Use voice and movement to portray character Work collaboratively in groups Use freeze frames and tableau effectively Improvise in role Perform confidently for an audience Demonstrate understanding of Ancient Greek myths		A short performance demonstrating how resilience helps people face challenges, learn from setbacks and succeed AFL to monitor drama techniques confidence. Show understanding of resilience through character choices. Reflect on personal strategies for overcoming difficulties. Work collaboratively and support others	
	<u>Autumn 1</u>	<u>Autumn 2</u>	<u>Spring 1</u>	<u>Spring 2</u>	<u>Summer 1</u>	<u>Summer 2</u>
Year 7	<u>Introduction to drama</u>		<u>Gothic Horror</u>		<u>The Tempest</u>	
Key Substantive Knowledge: What will students learn?						
Year 7	Drama studio expectations and conventions Rules and routines for working safely and effectively in a drama space. Appropriate behaviour when rehearsing and performing. The purpose and features of tableaux		Typical features of Gothic Horror: Darkness and shadow Isolation Mystery and suspense Supernatural elements Haunted settings Secrets and hidden dangers How settings influence mood and atmosphere.		<i>The Tempest</i> is a play written by William Shakespeare. The play is set partly on a magical island following a shipwreck. Prospero uses magic to create a storm that brings his enemies to the island. Prospero was once Duke of Milan before being overthrown by his brother Antonio.	

	What a tableau (freeze frame) is. How still images communicate ideas, emotions, characters and situations. Physical theatre techniques How body shape, posture, movement and gesture create character. How status can be communicated physically through body language. Vocal skills in drama The meaning and importance of: Projection Articulation Pitch Tone How vocal choices affect audience understanding. Improvisation conventions The principles of improvisation, including accepting and building on ideas ("Yes, and..."). The importance of collaboration in creating drama. Performance and devising How a short performance is created through rehearsal and refinement. The role of evaluation in improving dramatic work.		Common Gothic locations such as: Castles Manor houses Graveyards Forests Abandoned buildings Typical Gothic character types: Ghosts Villains Victims Mad scientists Mysterious strangers How characters' motivations and secrets drive stories. Beginning: establish mystery. Middle: build suspense and conflict. Ending: reveal, twist or resolution.		The main events of the plot and how they connect. Prospero is a powerful magician and Miranda's father. Miranda has grown up on the island and has little experience of the outside world. Ariel is a spirit who serves Prospero and seeks freedom. Caliban is an inhabitant of the island who believes it belongs to him. Ferdinand is the prince who falls in love with Miranda. Antonio betrayed Prospero to gain power. Revenge and forgiveness. Power and control. Freedom and servitude. Family and loyalty. Love and relationships. Shakespeare uses conflict to drive the story forward. Characters have different viewpoints and motivations. The ending demonstrates the consequences of choosing forgiveness over revenge.	
	Disciplinary Knowledge (Key skills)					
Year 7	Create and perform tableaux Use stillness, levels, facial expressions and body position to		Use drama techniques to communicate meaning. Create and sustain a role in performance.		Use freeze frames/tableaux to communicate character and narrative.	

Pupils will have had opportunities to:

- Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English.
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates.
- Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of listeners.
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints.
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas.

By the end of KS2 pupils will have encountered:

- Significant authors including Shakespeare.
- Stories from literary heritage.
- Classic literature and myths.
- Plays and performance texts.

Key vocabulary	Drama, Tableau, Freeze Frame, Character, Physicality, Body Language, Gesture, Facial Expression, Status, Projection, Articulation, Pitch, Tone, Improvisation, Collaboration, Devising, Rehearsal, Performance, Audience, Evaluation, Feedback		Freeze frame Thought tracking Improvisation Narration Soundscape Role play Tension Atmosphere Characterisation Physical theatre		Atmosphere Tension Motivation Conflict Emotion Relationship Interpretation Theme Narrative Performance Drama technique Rehearsal Evaluate Reflect Stage presence	
Assessment checkpoint and evidence of learning	AFL for monitoring of Participation and teamwork. Use of drama conventions. Ability to communicate themes and messages. Reflection and evaluation.		AFL to monitor stillness, tableaux, using body size for movement, the power of voice and facial expressions, improvisation A 3-5 minute devised Gothic Horror performance showcasing Gothic conventions and dramatic techniques suitable for Year 7 students		Create and perform a scene from the play. AFL to monitor Participates with support Uses basic movement and voice Creates believable characters Contributes ideas positively Sustains character confidently Uses drama techniques effectively Leads creatively Shows strong performance skills Uses dramatic techniques with impact	
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 8	Introduction to drama		Who Durnit?		Transition to High School	
Key Substantive Knowledge: What will students learn?						
Year 8	Drama studio expectations and conventions Rules and routines for working safely and effectively in a drama space. Appropriate behaviour when rehearsing and performing.		The role of Sherlock Holmes as a literary detective created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle . Typical features of Victorian detective stories, including clues, suspects, motives, red herrings, and revelations. How suspense and dramatic tension are		The range of emotions associated with moving to a new school, including excitement, anxiety, confidence and uncertainty. Common challenges faced during transition, such as navigating a new environment, making	

	The purpose and features of tableaux		created in mystery narratives.		friendships, managing workload and adapting to new expectations.	
	What a tableau (freeze frame) is.		The characteristics of key figures within detective stories:		Strategies that support successful transition, including seeking help, resilience, problem-solving and effective communication.	
	How still images communicate ideas, emotions, characters and situations.		Detective		The importance of positive relationships, belonging and peer support in promoting wellbeing.	
	Physical theatre techniques		Sidekick (e.g. Watson)			
	How body shape, posture, movement and gesture create character.		Victim		The purpose and features of key drama conventions:	
	How status can be communicated physically through body language.		Suspect			
	Vocal skills in drama		Witness		Freeze frames	
	The meaning and importance of:		Criminal			
	Projection		How status influences relationships between characters.		Thought tracking	
	Articulation		How motives drive a character's actions.			
	Pitch		The elements of drama including:		Hot seating	
	Tone		Tension			
	How vocal choices affect audience understanding.		Mood		Role-on-the-wall	
	Improvisation conventions		Atmosphere			
	The principles of improvisation, including accepting and building on ideas ("Yes, and...").		Role		Conscience alley	
	The importance of collaboration in creating drama.		Relationships			
	Performance and devising		Focus		Forum theatre	
	How a short performance is created through rehearsal and refinement.		How dramatic structure builds towards a resolution.			
	The role of evaluation in improving dramatic work.		Freeze frames		Improvisation	
			Thought tracking			
			Hot seating		How drama can be used to explore real-life issues, emotions and experiences.	
			Conscience alley			
			Teacher in role		The elements of an effective dramatic narrative:	
			Flashbacks			
			Narration		Character	
			Physical theatre			
					Setting	
					Conflict/challenge	
					Resolution	
					Message/theme	
					How voice, movement and facial expression communicate character and emotion.	
					How dramatic tension is created and maintained.	
					How audience interpretation can be influenced through performance choices.	

					The process involved in devising, rehearsing and performing original drama.	
Disciplinary Knowledge (Key skills)						
Year 8	Create and perform tableaux Use stillness, levels, facial expressions and body position to communicate meaning. Develop character through physicality Alter movement, posture and gesture to portray different characters and status relationships. Apply vocal techniques Use projection, articulation, pitch and tone effectively in performance Improvise collaboratively Respond to others' ideas. Sustain improvised scenes. Work constructively within a group. Devise original drama Generate ideas, rehearse and combine dramatic techniques into a coherent performance. Evaluate performance Give and receive peer feedback. Reflect on strengths and areas for improvement in their own and others' work.		Developing believable characters through movement, gesture, voice and facial expression. Using improvisation to generate dramatic material. Constructing a coherent mystery narrative. Applying drama conventions to communicate meaning to an audience. Sustaining a role during rehearsal and performance. Using vocal skills effectively: Pace Tone Volume Emphasis Using physical skills effectively: Posture Gesture Facial expression Spatial awareness Analysing the effectiveness of dramatic performances. Identifying how tension and suspense are created. Reflecting on their own work and suggesting improvements. Using appropriate drama terminology when evaluating performances. Working productively within an ensemble. Accepting and developing ideas from others.		Generate ideas from a stimulus related to transition and change. Use drama conventions deliberately to explore themes and communicate meaning. Develop believable characters experiencing transition-related situations. Devise and structure a short performance with a clear narrative and audience purpose. Apply vocal skills including: Projection Tone Pace Clarity Apply physical skills including: Gesture Posture Facial expression Use of space Sustain a role within improvised and scripted scenarios. Adapt performance choices in response to rehearsal and feedback. Analyse characters' thoughts, feelings and motivations. Reflect on the effectiveness of drama techniques used in performance. Give constructive peer feedback using	

			Rehearsing and refining performance material. Contributing to the creation of a final devised performance.		appropriate drama vocabulary. Evaluate how successfully a performance communicates ideas about transition. Collaborate effectively within a group to create performance material. Rehearse, refine and improve performance work. Take creative risks and respond positively to challenges. Use reflection to develop both performance skills and personal confidence.	
National Curriculum links to topic						
National Curriculum links to topic Aims: This Year 8 unit directly builds on Year 7 Drama experiences, including: • Responding creatively to a stimulus. • Developing character through role-on-the-wall and hot seating. • Using drama conventions to explore ideas. • Devising original performances. • Developing physical and vocal performance skills. • Working collaboratively to rehearse and refine performance work. Students should already be able to: • Create simple characters. • Use voice and movement to communicate meaning. • Work cooperatively in drama groups. • Explore themes through improvisation. • Reflect on and improve performance work						
Key vocabulary	Drama, Tableau, Freeze Frame, Character, Physicality, Body Language, Gesture, Facial Expression, Status, Projection, Articulation, Pitch, Tone, Improvisation, Collaboration, Devising, Rehearsal, Performance, Audience, Evaluation, Feedback		Characterisation Improvisation Ensemble Freeze Frame Thought Tracking Hot Seating Conscience Alley Physical Theatre Tension Atmosphere Status Motive Deduction Red Herring Suspense		Character, Improvisation, Freeze Frame, Thought Tracking, Hot Seating, Role-on-the-Wall, Conscience Alley, Forum Theatre, Devising, Rehearsal, Conflict, Resolution, Projection, Gesture, Stage Presence, Narrative.	
Assessment checkpoint and evidence of learning	AFL for monitoring of Participation and teamwork. Use of drama conventions.		AFL to monitor Characterisation Vocal skills Physical performance Use of dramatic conventions Collaboration		Group-devised performance exploring the challenges and opportunities of moving to high school.	

	Ability to communicate themes and messages. Reflection and evaluation.		Ability to create tension and suspense Key Drama Techniques Freeze frame Thought tracking Hot seating Teacher in role Conscience alley Improvisation Physical theatre Flashback Narration This sequence culminates in a polished detective mystery performance while introducing students to core drama skills in a highly engaging way.		AFL to monitor use a range of drama techniques effectively. Work collaboratively to create performance material. Demonstrate understanding of transition challenges and solutions. Reflect thoughtfully on personal growth and resilience.	
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