



## Curriculum Detail: Drama

In Year 7, students undergo a series of baseline assessments covering foundation skills and areas including role-play, teamwork, trust, characterisation, sound, timing, eye-focus, mime and movement. They are introduced to the basics of Greek theatre and look at other historical periods in the light of dramatic developments such as naturalism, Victorian melodrama and medieval morality plays. By focusing on a particular genre - the ghost story, for example - students are able to examine specific areas in detail, e.g. how atmosphere and tension can be created using voice, movement, lighting, sound, narration, proxemics and techniques like hot-seating. They learn about stereotypes (perhaps through studying pantomimes and fairy tales), vocal and physical exaggeration, audience interaction and communication.

Year 8 students look at specific areas in more detail. They might examine different kinds of stereotypes, for example, along with thought-tracking and the development of complex characters, and think about the way stereotypes can evolve and be reappropriated. Through their practice, students develop team working, organisational, leadership, evaluative and listening skills and begin to gain an understanding of the purpose of specific techniques and strategies. By focusing on a particular event, phenomenon or story (recent examples have included *Alice in Wonderland*, World War II, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the slapstick genre and stage combat), students deepen their knowledge of historical context and areas such as costume, props and imaginative worlds.

In Year 9, students revisit the theatre of ancient Greece, exploring its origins and focusing on elements such as stylised movements, the role of the chorus, synchronisation, reported speech, violence and the use of masks. Students also look at other genres and periods in greater detail - Shakespeare and the theatre of the Elizabethan era, for instance, or the mystery and morality plays of the medieval world. Key elements of the playwright's craft like plot, structure, characterisation, personification and symbolism are examined along with historical aspects such as the style of acting practised at The Globe or the portrayal of the seven deadly sins in morality plays. Students explore important themes like revenge, love, deception, betrayal and conflict as well as specific genre ingredients such as stock characters, gestures and exaggerated movement in Victorian melodrama. Through the detailed study of a modern play, students are able to learn more about technical aspects like music, sound, lighting, costume and props as well as techniques such as direct address, multi-role acting, scriptwriting and directing.

Year 10 students are introduced to course and assessment criteria before embarking on performances they devise together in groups and develop over a number of weeks. They are filmed - under exam conditions - as they explore a complete published play as well as individual themes.

In Year 11, students learn about the aspects that contribute to live theatre in greater detail - set, costume, props, lighting and sound as well as directing and acting skills. After watching a live production, they write an evaluation under controlled conditions before being assessed for their performance examination.