

A LEVEL DRAMA & THEATRE at Paston College

Please use this as a quick and easy way of getting into the practice of thinking and seeing the world around you as a student of Drama. Below are suggestions of things to read and watch plus:

2 new, brief creative activities on 'Creating a Character' to explore and prepare for September

Acting is a 'doing' word, from the verb, to act.

This **Edexcel, A level Drama and Theatre** course will allow you to **practically** explore the nature, skills and techniques of live Drama and Theatre.

If you are someone who likes being up on your feet working; exploring and creating text, then this is the structured and focused learning opportunity for you.

With our 150 seater Griffon Theatre and studio space we now have the facilities and professional expertise to support the 30 years of excellence in performance that Paston has a reputation for

Watch 'Performing Arts at Paston: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igjdt5lluwo>

Drama and Theatre is the subject for the student with an inquisitive and questioning mind and wants **to do** something with it. It's a subject that covers; social and historical issues; the political world; psychological behaviour; works of Literature; Philosophy, Art and Music. All within the specific exploration of plays, playwrights, performance practitioners and practical skills and techniques required to perform.

Do you know who Sir Mark Rylance is? What do you know of his performance work?

He is regarded as one of the greatest Contemporary and Classical actors of modern times

You might recognise him from films such as **The BFG**, **Dunkirk** and **Bridge of Spies** or been lucky enough to see him in the central role of Jez Butterworth's internationally successful play, **Jerusalem**.

Watch: '**An Evening with Sir Mark Rylance: Tales of Shakespeare, stage and screen**' (2017) to find out why

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrZH9WmpOrw>

Many successful actors and theatre practitioners state that the best advice for young actors/students thinking of studying Drama is: **'to read...everything and anything'**.

Texts will help open your eyes to the world around you; to help empathise and sympathise with those who have different experiences or similar experiences in a different context

1. To get started with this, perhaps consider these theatre titles;

'Ways of Seeing' by John Berger

'The Empty Space' by Peter Brook

‘Year of the King’ by Anthony Sher
‘What’s My Motivation’ by Michal Simkins
‘Why Is that So Funny’ By John Wright
‘The Actor Speaks’ by Patsy Rodenburg
‘The Art of Course Acting’ by Michael Green
‘Bluff Your Way In Theatre’ by Fidelis Morgan

Classical fiction writers like Charles Dickens, Anton Chekhov, Leo Tolstoy, George Elliot, Elizabeth Gaskell provide vivid character studies and psychological truth.

But this can also be found in modern writers such Phillip Pullman, Sue Townsend, Melvin Burgess, Anne Fine, Iain Banks and Irvine Welsh

2. To see new, exciting theatre work and some of the possibilities you could achieve when studying the Devising element of A Level Drama and Theatre at Paston, why not look at the following:

Sagami: Acts of Love video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4RNv0VSkY8>

Gecko Theatre : www.geckotheatre.com

Complicite Showreel, 2011: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uba-qzbZsV8>

Improbable Theatre: <http://www.improbable.co.uk/>

3. To see a combination of more Classical and Contemporary play productions visit;

www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

www.rsc.org.uk

www.shakespeares-globe.org

<http://www.stagework.org/>

Paston College is rightfully proud of its student theatre company; Far East. See what you think of these extracts, one in our old theatre and one in the new:

‘Alice In Wonderland’; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9YiYu9IZnU>

‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqqZJH7UfDM>

Finally some images to make you think and recognise the future possibilities of choosing Drama and Theatre at Paston.



Simon Russell Beale as Prospero in the ground breaking 2017 RSC production of Shakespeare's '**The Tempest**'. This production was revolutionary because it used **live 3D imagery**, created by ICL, for the servant spirit, Ariel



Mark Rylance and **Mackenzie Crook** in Jez Butterworth's '**Jerusalem**'; a darkly comic take on the classical English idyll. This play has already become a modern classic since its first production in 2009



Amazing stage and set designs by the internationally celebrated theatre design pioneer, **Katrin Brack**. Look her up on Google for more inspirational ideas of just how imaginative and creative you could be when studying Drama.

Over the summer we would like you to attempt two **brief tasks**:

Task (1)

Choose, observe and recreate **ONE** character from one of the following:

- a. Real life...e.g. a family, friend, member of the public
- b. Novel /work of fiction... e.g. from a modern or classical novel, poem, short story or article
- c. Photograph or painting
- d. Piece of music... slightly more expressionistic but still a possible starting point

Things to consider:

How your character moves, hold themselves, physically - and why

How your character talks, sounds, uses language / words - and why

What your character wears (costume) - and why

How your character uses social space (proxemics) i.e. how he/ she relates to others – and why

What status your character presents in different scenarios i.e. in public, at work, shopping, at home – and why

***In September:** be prepared to walk around and interact in character, with others. The character you create will be used in introductory exercises to this course.*

Task (2)

Create a journal or log book of the process you went through to create the work for **Task (1)**

We will be looking at evidence of process- so record everything you considered and did. For EG:

- A. What things from the **Task (1)** list (a – d) you considered. Record what you decided against and why, as well as what you opted for.
- B. How you developed your responses to the section '**things to consider**'.
- C. How you practised building your character: physically, vocally and spatially – keep a 'diary like' record if possible of what goes well and what doesn't. This will enable you to show a sense of development in your working methods.

This journal or diary can be recorded in a digital format or on paper (e.g. drawings, photographs, images, notes: any or all of these are useful records of process. It **does not** have to be in essay form but should be a true record of how you '*created your character*'... the choice is yours

There is no set amount of work expected but the more evidence you present of your workings...the easier it is for us to assess your approach to creative tasks

Please remember: this course is about enjoying the process of acting.

'So make this fun & enjoy'.