



Year 8 – Live Theatre Review – Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime

Students will watch a modern performance with the use of physical theatre and ensemble acting, to develop an understanding these techniques to use in devising performances,

The Actor's Tool Kit

- Pitch
- Pace
- Tone
- Accent
- Volume
- Emphasis
- Facial Expressions
- Gestures
- Posture
- Mannerism
- Body Language



Plot summary

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time follows the story of Christopher Boone, a 15 year old, who is exceptional at Maths but finds people confusing. The play opens with Christopher discovering a dead dog in his neighbour, Mrs Shears', garden. Despite his father, Ed, warning Christopher not to get involved, Christopher decides to investigate the death of the dog. In doing so he discovers that his mother is not dead as his father had told him, but alive and well, living in London. He also discovers that it was his father who killed the dog. Christopher feels that his father is a murderer, who he cannot trust. He can no longer live with him and so he bravely travels to London to find his mother. Christopher has difficulty settling into his new life in London and returns to Swindon to take his A-level Maths exam. The play ends with him passing the exam and the realisation that he can do anything he puts his mind to.

Live Theatre Review

- Pick a point in a scene
- Describe what the actor is doing in detail
- Explain why they are acting like that, what are they trying to communicate
- Evaluate if they are acting successfully to communicate the emotion or events of the moment.



3 Vocal skills and 3 physical skills every time!

Ensemble

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time uses an ensemble cast. This means that the actors are on stage as a group, sometimes all at once. They might perform multiple parts or roles, for example the actor who plays Roger Shears could also be an extra on the train or the actor that plays Reverend Peters could also play a policeman. This means that actors have to quickly switch between different characters, this can be very difficult - one role might require the actor to be sensible and quiet, the other might require the actor to be suddenly loud and very energetic. Actors might also move set pieces on and off stage like a stage crew might ordinarily do.

Physical theatre

Physical theatre shows that you don't have to use words to express ideas. It uses techniques such as movement, mime, gesture and dance and can be used to explore complex social and cultural issues.

Combining drama and dance, physical theatre emphasizes the movement of the body to tell a story

Year 8 Glossary

Mime	The use of movements, gestures and facial expressions to communicate an idea without words
Posture	The position a character holds themselves in when sitting or standing
Gestures	A movement made by part of the body (e.g. arms, head) to convey a character's emotion
Mannerism	A repeated physical or vocal habit that contributes to characterisation
Pitch	How high or low an actor's voice is. This can be used as a feature of a character or to show a character's emotional state.
Pace	Pace is the speed that lines are delivered
Volume	How loud or quiet a vocal performance is. This could be a feature of a character or how a character's emotions
Intonation	This is the rise and fall of a voice that created a natural pattern of speech. This can be used to create meaning, by stressing a word for emphasis
Tone	How a line is delivered, adding emotional impact to spoken words
Accent	Can signal to the audience where a character is from, social class or status
Pauses	Pauses can be used to create tension, can shape the delivery of an actor's lines and/or can add to the realism of a scene

Unison	The process where actions or dialogue happen at the same time and in the same way
Canon	People moving or speaking in the same way one after the other
Thrust Stage	A stage that extends out into the audience, so that they are seated on three sides
Traverse	A long, narrow stage which runs between the audience, who face the stage on both sides
Proscenium Arch Stage	A box shaped stage which is set back from the audience so that the front end is open to them, framed by the arch itself
End on Stage	A stage which has the audience on one side of the stage, facing the action
In the Round	A style of staging where the audience is seated on all sides of the stage.
Chanting	A chant is a short, simple series of syllables or words that are spoken with the same tone. It is usually repetitive
Narration	A character who comments on the action and the plot to the audience, can be first- person (involved in the action) or third -person (set apart from the action)
Thought Tracking	When a character tells the audience their thoughts during a pause in the action
Devil and Angel	Technique where a character faces a dilemma and the audience can hear the voice of their conscience, the good angel to the right and bad angel to their left
Non-linear structure	When the events of the plot are not in chronological order.
Split Stage	When the stage is split into two different areas representing different places or times