DRAMA HANDBOOK

Elements
Role
Focus
Time
Tension
Space
Action

Conventions

Techniques
Voice
Body
Movement
Space

Creating a Character
Role on the Wall suggestions
Guiding questions
Emotions
Adjectives

Reflection
What is reflection?
Logging
Self reflection
Watching other’s performances

Creating a Character
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The Elements & Conventions of Drama

What follows are guides for understanding and writing about the Elements and Conventions of Drama.

The elements of Drama are the things good performances cannot do without. One must consider the roles, action, time, place, moods of a performance in order to bring it to life.

The Conventions of drama are the things that dramaturges use to shape or “put together” a performance. These things help to build the elements of drama.
### The Elements of Drama

The elements of drama can be defined as “the key ingredients of drama”. They provide a foundation for drama and are terms that teachers and students can use to analyze and describe what they do in drama. The elements combine with contrasts in movement and stillness, sound and silence, and darkness and light to communicate meaning in drama.

### The Four Main Elements Are:

#### Role

**WHO?** Role involves stepping into the space of another person, sustaining belief in that position, and representing that person’s relationships and point of view.

#### Time

**WHEN?** Time is when the drama is set.

#### Place

**WHERE?** Space is where the dramatic action takes place. It refers both to the imagined place of the dramatic action and the physical space that the students have to work in.

#### Action

**WHAT?** Action is what each person in role is doing and thinking alone and with others. It’s what happens in the drama.

### Other Important Elements Are:

#### Tension

Tension is the force that drives the drama. It’s created by obstacles that those in the drama have to overcome. The element of tension heightens the dramatic intensity and creates suspense or unease.

#### Symbol

Where an object or action in a scene means more than it is.

#### Mood

The atmosphere of the piece. This is the overriding feeling of a scene or part of a scene.

#### Focus

Focus is the point that demands the audience’s attention. It is the central event, character, theme, issue or problem of a drama or part of a drama. The term “focus” is also used to refer to a place or moment in time that captures the essence of the dramatic action. The third way the term “focus” is used is to refer to the student’s focus or concentration on their work.

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In drama, a role is placed in a setting of time and space and combines with action, tension, and focus to create dramatic meaning.

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Role: I was a soldier who was very frightened. My name was Jeff. I had only come to war because I was conscripted into the army. I do not actually like the war and I do not consider myself as brave. I was only able to curl up in the hoping of staying safe.

Time: This was 1942, though we didn’t make the audience aware of this, perhaps if we were wearing old style army uniforms or had old gas masks people would understand further what time it was.

Place: a battlefield with mud everywhere, ruts in the ground, barbed wire across our path

Action: My group of soldiers must get from one end of the battlefield to the other to retrieve a secret code machine from the enemy.

Focus: The main focus was on the man struggling for breath we showed this by having the rest of us at lower levels and to the side from him. He was in the centre at a higher level.

Tension: That we are in danger of being killed. I showed my tension by curling up as tightly as I could. I also had my face all wrinkled up and only just visible to the audience so that they could see that I wanted to hold myself in away from the danger.

Symbol: The symbol we had was the gasmask. Although in improvisation we weren’t able to have an actual mask it was a symbol of safety and security. If I had one on I could have made the idea of safety more clear by holding the mask closely to my face. We could also have had the gas mask a long way from the struggling man’s hands to show he had no safety.

Mood: The mood was scary. I showed this by being curled up in a ball. As a group we showed this by being separate from each other, almost isolated.
Identifying the Elements of Drama

You could be asked to identify the elements of drama in performance, in a photograph, in a script. Here are some hints as to what to look for.

**Role**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This Person is a...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King/Queen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother/Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son/Daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girlfriend/Boyfriend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband/Wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enemy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workmate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**They are:**

Calculated
Cheerful
Caring
Flirtatious
Courteous
Depressed
Creative
Saintly
Excitable
Bubbly
Jovial
Organised
Bossy

*I can tell this by...*

- Costume
  - what it looks like
  - colour
  - texture
  - how it is worn
- Hair
- Facial expressions
- Use of Body
- Use of Space
- Where they are
- What they are doing
- What they are holding
- How they are standing/sitting
- Distance from other characters
- Focus
- Accessories
- Who they are with and how they relate to them

**Place**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where is this set?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lounge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stairway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pub/Bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Rich Person's House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Poor Person's House</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*How can you tell?*

- Props
- Costume
- Set
- Colours
- Roles
- Small/Large
**Situation/Action**

What’s Happening? What Is it About?
- Do the characters get along?
- Is someone leaving?
- Do they live together/Work Together?
- What has happened?
- What might happen in the future?
- Is someone sick?
- Has something Good/Bad happened?
- Are they looking forward to something?
- Are they: Happy/Sad/Guilty/Excited/Frustrated/Angry/Scared?
- Are they making something?
- Are they friends?

What is Happening? How can you tell?
- Setting: Time, Place
- Relationships
- Space Use
- Body Language
- Costume
- Props
- Roles
- Tension

**Focus**

What are you, as the audience, drawn to?
- What is the actor focused on?

How can you see this?
- Levels
- Lighting
- Separation from others
- Direction of Gaze

One person/object on his own with others grouped together
- Larger/Smaller than other Objects/People
- Different Colour
- Central
- The way something is held

**Symbol**

Some Suggestions:
- Things to look for...
  - Objects
  - Images

- Flowers
- Food
- Glass
- Teapot
- Knife
- Picture
- Plant
- Jewellery
- Suitcase
- Glove
- Candles
- Shoe

What does it mean?
- Love
- Hate
- Life
- Death
- Blood
- Family
- Anger
- Joy
- Strength
- Power
- Separation
- Growth
- Entanglement
- History
- Connection
- Control
- Friendship
- Pride
- Wealth
- Rank

What else is supporting this idea?
- Body Language
- Where it is
- Closeness to other things
- The way it looks
- Colour
- How it is looked upon
- How it is held

**Tension**

Things that show tension...
- Leaning forward/back
- Close to someone
- Far from someone
- Leaning over top of someone
- Body Language
- Crossed arms
- Clenched Fists
- Gritted Teeth
- Furrowed brow
- Squinting Eyes
- Back turned to someone

A group of people against one alone
- Close but not touching/Held back
- People close together looking at each other
- People not looking at each other
- Arms raised
- Hands held tightly together

**Mood**

The MOOD could be...
- Glum
- Excitable
- Happy
- Sad
- Dull
- Joyful
- Angry
- Simmering

I can see this by...
- Lighting
- Body Language
- Colours
- Light/Darkness
- Facial Expression
- Costume
- Setting
- Space Use
The Conventions of Drama

Conventions are ways of working or strategies that we use to structure and sequence (or frame) dramatic action. Performers use conventions to explore meaning, deepen understanding, or add impact in drama work. Some of the conventions are:

**Mime**
A form of theatre performance in which action and character are suggested using gesture, movement, and facial expression without words or sounds. Can be a highly sophisticated silent art form in which the body is used as the instrument of communication. In drama, mime enables the students to explore and represent ideas and events through movement and gesture.

**Flashbacks and flashforwards**
Moving back and forward in time in order to extend understanding of themes and characters.

**Freeze-frame image**
A convention in which the members of a group use their bodies to make an image or tableau capturing an idea, theme, or moment in time; also called a group sculpture or tableau.

**Narration**
A convention in which a person narrates the action that occurs within a drama.

**Dance drama/Movement Piece**
Expressive movement through which ideas, stories, sounds and music can be interpreted.

**Soundscape**
A sequence of sounds shaped to enhance action and mood in a drama.

**Parallel play**
A situation in which all of the students work simultaneously (at the same time), but separately, in their own space.

**Repetition**
Repeated ideas, images, words which help to sink in the idea or create a symbol

**Ritual**
Ritual is an established procedure or a sequence of movements that has a sense of ceremony, formality and custom about it. It may be accompanied by sound and may incorporate repetition or the use of symbols.

**Slow Motion**
The process of slowing down and exaggerating movements, facial expression, and gesture to heighten tension or to isolate a particularly important moment.

**Chorus of voices**
A chorus of voices is a group using their voices together to make patterns of sound, or say words or phrases together.

**Chorus of Movement**
A chorus of movement is a group moving together with a sense of purpose. The movement may be repetitive or stylised. A chorus of movement can heighten the moment or create a particular spatial or visual effect.

**Spoken thoughts**
In this convention a person in role speaks the private thoughts of their character to add tension or provide information. This can be done when the other characters in the scene freeze or whilst other characters have a quiet conversation to themselves.

**Voices in the Head**
In this convention a student who is not in role comes and speaks the thoughts of another person in role. This is to add to the understanding of the character so should give important information about them, and express their personality.

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For example, if you had to write about a convention you used in your performance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convention Used</th>
<th>Where/Description</th>
<th>Why did you chose this convention?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>We used a low drum beat through our marching scene. There was a low flowing sound underneath the music. When the Music crashed into thunderous rock music, we hit the ground and began acting out the chaos scene.</td>
<td>This music was used to build up the tension towards our chaos scene. The drum beat build in pace as it got closer to the rock music, so it mimicked the heart beats of the soldiers and was designed to get our audiences heart beats racing. The rock music was loud and crazy and helped to build the atmosphere of the chaos scene showing the confusion going through the soldier’s minds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technique Talk

What follows are words for talking about use of drama technique. These can be linked to talking about elements: role, space, time, focus, mood, action tension. An actor uses the techniques of drama to carry out a role. They can be used for talking about characters personality or feelings/emotions. They can be used for talking about how you would do/have done moments in a play or scene. They can be used to give details about a performance you have seen and to reflect on the effectiveness of an actor's performance.
**Some Words for Talking About Voice Use**

**Pitch**
Pitch is how high or low the voice is. Whatever pitch the voice is at can suggest the emotion or tone of the story.

- **High Pitch:** Violent or hysterical emotion
  - e.g. anger, joy, fear, excitement, surprise
- **Medium Pitch:** Ordinary
  - e.g. conversation, description, reflection
- **Low Pitch:** Intense emotions
  - e.g. sad, solemn, intense anger or fear

**Pause**
As an actor you can use pause to:
- Indicate the end of a phrase, sentence or paragraph
- Emphasise a point
- Show emotion
- Take time for your character to think
- Give the other character time to think
- Convey a dramatic point
- Give the audience time to absorb
- Take a breath

**Pace**
Pace is all about how fast you talk. This indicates emotion just like Pitch.

- Quick Pace
- Medium Pace
- Slow Pace

**Articulation**
How clearly you speak

**Volume**
How loud or quiet your voice is.

- It can be used to emphasise character: A shy character would speak very quietly
- It can be used to emphasise emotions: An Angry person may use a loud voice, an excited person also. Sadness is often acted in a quiet voice.

**Inflection**
Inflection is the upward and downward glide of the voice within a syllable or word. Do not confuse this with pitch. We may be speaking in a high pitch but within the pitch there will be inflections.

Inflection can change the meaning of simple words by rising or falling inflection.

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An example of how to talk about voice

When my character is excited they talk quickly, loudly and with a high pitch and very short pauses in between lines. These are quick pauses only to catch my breath because my character would be so excited their brain would be working very quickly in lots of different directions.

When my character says “But he was not alone” my character would pause before he said “But”. Then he would slowly say the sentence. He wants to emphasize his point. He especially would emphasize the word “Not” by saying it more slowly and slightly louder, with a pause at the end. This would show that it was important to my character that he prove that his son was a strong person, not vulnerable and alone.
## Some Words for Talking About Body

### Facial expression: eyes, eyebrows, nose, mouth, jaw

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eyes</th>
<th>Forehead</th>
<th>Mouth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Crinkled up</td>
<td>Frown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>half closed</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>Curved at the corners, up/down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>winking</td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper lip underneath the lower lip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking left or right</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower lip sticking out/pouting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking left and right</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open at one side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wide open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shut firmly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Crinkled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sideways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Slightly open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Smiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frowning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lips being bitten by teeth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nose</th>
<th>Jaw</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>twitching</td>
<td>Locked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raised on one side</td>
<td>loose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scrunched up</td>
<td>down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pointed in the air</td>
<td>clenched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low to the ground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Shoulders</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up</td>
<td>forward</td>
<td>Straight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drooped</td>
<td>down</td>
<td>Curved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>held high</td>
<td>Slouched</td>
<td>Stretched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilted, sideways</td>
<td>Unbalanced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turned</td>
<td>One shoulder high, one low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaning</td>
<td>hanging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drooping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posture: head, neck, back, shoulders, stomach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firmly planted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tippytoed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One flat other raised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### An example of how to talk about body

To show that my character is a very proud person I would hold my head up high on my shoulders. I would keep my lips straight, not quite a frown but in no way a smile, with a tight jaw and eyes looking downwards, along their noses at people as though they are below me. I would hold my shoulders down to lengthen my neck and keep my back straight. My stance also would be strong and straight, showing that I feel I am high up in the social sphere.
Some words for talking about movement

Types of Movement

- Walking
- Running
- Crawling
- Rolling
- Hopping
- Skipping
- Sliding
- Jumping
- Leaping
- Tumbling
- Walking backwards
- Galloping
- Walking on hands
- Dragging lower body with arms
- Spinning
- Dancing
- Tip-toeing

Ways of Changing movement

- Flow
  - Smooth sustained
  - Jerky, disjointed percussive
- Tension
  - Loose
  - Relaxed
  - Tense
  - Constricted.
- Direction
  - Direct—moving to a specific point without veering off the path
  - Indirect—wandering aimlessly.
- Change of direction: suddenly or slowly
- Weight
  - Light
  - Heavy
- Time
  - Slow
  - Fast
- Size
  - Wide
  - Narrow
  - High
  - Low
  - Deep
  - Shallow

An example of how to talk about movement:

When my character is angry with someone and the other character walked onto stage my character would walk fast and directly up to the other character. They would move percussively to show they are losing control of their body because they are so enraged. I would walk with large, wide steps to get as close to the person as quickly as possible.
Some Words for Talking About Space

**Personal Space**
The ‘bubble’ around a person on stage, their area for use.
Is it big, small, high, low?

**General Space**
All of the space other than personal space
How are you using it?
Are you using a small/big amount of space?
Are your characters close, or distant?
Is the space cluttered/open?

**Focus**
How is the space being used to focus the audience on a character? An object?

**Groupings**
Are characters grouped in particular ways to suggest their relationships or tension?

**Levels**
- **High:** the area above shoulder level and your own body height. Actions at this level could include leaping, reaching the top shelf and changing a light bulb.
- **Medium:** the area from shoulder level to your kneecaps, generally within your own body height. Actions on this level could include walking, setting the table, sweeping the floor.
- **Low:** The area below your hips, kneecaps and around floor level, below your own height. Actions on this level could include creeping, rolling, crawling, digging.

**Proximity**
How close or far a character is from other characters or objects

**Position on Stage**
Forward, upstage, downstage, left, right, facing audience or away

An example of how to talk about space
Because my character is a shy person they keep to their own personal space. They do not move out to other people’s space. He tends to be on a lower level than other characters to show the way that the character feels about being uncertain about others and where he fits in with others. At no point does he try to get the focus onto him. He generally stays towards the back of the stage, hidden from others.
Creating a Character

The following pages are aids to developing characters with depth.
ROLE ON THE WALL

Your teacher is likely to ask you at some stage to do a “role on the wall” about a character you are performing. In order to create a rounded character you must consider all aspects of the role to best understand your person. Like real human beings good dramatic characters need to have a detailed background and well developed personality.

A role on the wall is created by drawing a gingerbread man and writing information about the character in and around the gingerbread man. Information about the character’s personality, background, who they are as a human goes on the inside. Information about the character’s appearance, the things they show the world, go around the outside of the gingerbread man.

INSIDE:
- Name
- Age
- gender
- status: rich or poor
- family
- background
- where they’re from
- what they do
- where they were born / job
- have their been any major developments in their life?
- What is happening for them of interest at the moment
- Likes/dislikes
- Beliefs/values

Outside:
- Voice
- Movement
- Use of Body
- Appearance

Hot-Seating
If you get an opportunity to do hot-seating answer these questions:
How well did I stay in role during the hot seating?
What was I asked during this exercise?
How well was I able to answer these questions?
What did I find out about my character?
How did this exercise help me to be able to play this character?
How did it help me to understand or to develop my character?
Taking on an acting role: Questions

- How does the title of your play relate to your character?
- What is your character’s main sense of urgency? What strong impulse motivates your character to act?
- If your character has a secret what is it?
- What rhythm might you associate with your character?
- What sound might you associate with your character? (e.g. sighing, wheezing, or grunting)
- What colour might you associate with your character?
- What object might you associate with your character?
- What animal might you associate with your character?
- What are your character’s two primary senses?
- Does your character ‘mask’ or cover up feelings and behaviours? If so what does your character mask, and how?
- Does your character have a sense of humour? Is this sense of humour used in a positive or negative way?
- In real life, would your character be your friend? Why or why not?
- What is your character’s most positive trait?
- What is your character’s status in the world? Do they have money? Power? If they are poor are they brow beaten or otherwise?
- What are your character’s major wants and desires?
- What is your character’s major objectives for each scene in which they appear? How does your character go about achieving those objectives?
- What is your character’s life objective? How does your character go about achieving their life objective?
- Has your character changed by the end of the play?
**Character Feelings**

You can describe your character's feelings in more exact terms than just "happy" or "sad." Check these lists for the exact nuance to describe your character's intensity of feelings.

### Intensity of Feelings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HAPPY</th>
<th>SAD</th>
<th>ANGRY</th>
<th>CONFUSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>Elated</td>
<td>Depressed</td>
<td>Furious</td>
<td>Bewildered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excited</td>
<td>Disappointed</td>
<td>Enraged</td>
<td>Trapped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overjoyed</td>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>Outraged</td>
<td>Troubled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thrilled</td>
<td>Hurt</td>
<td>Aggravated</td>
<td>Desperate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thrilled</td>
<td>Left out</td>
<td>Irate</td>
<td>Lost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ecstatic</td>
<td>Dejected</td>
<td>Seething</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fired up</td>
<td>Hopeless</td>
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<td>Delighted</td>
<td>Sorrowful</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
<td>Cheerful</td>
<td>Heartbroken</td>
<td>Upset</td>
<td>Disorganized</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Up</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>Mad</td>
<td>Fogy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Upset</td>
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<td>Distressed</td>
<td>Frustrated</td>
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<td>Regret</td>
<td>Agitated</td>
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<td>Perturbed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Moody</td>
<td>Uptight</td>
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<td>Blue</td>
<td>Dismayed</td>
<td>Bothered</td>
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<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>Sorry</td>
<td>Put out</td>
<td>Uncomfortable</td>
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<td>Fine</td>
<td>Lost</td>
<td>Irritated</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
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<td>Pleased</td>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
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<td>Perplexed</td>
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### Intensity of Feelings: AFRAID, WEAK, STRONG, GUILTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AFRAID</th>
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<th>STRONG</th>
<th>GUILTY</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Powerful</td>
<td>Sorrowful</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Horrified</td>
<td>Hopeless</td>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Remorseful</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Scared stiff</td>
<td>Beat</td>
<td>Gung ho</td>
<td>Ashamed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Petrified</td>
<td>Overwhelmed</td>
<td>Potent</td>
<td>Unworthy</td>
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<td>Fearful</td>
<td>Impotent</td>
<td>Super</td>
<td>Worthless</td>
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<td>Panicky</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Forceful</td>
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<td>Exhausted</td>
<td>Proud</td>
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<td>Drained</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>Sorry</td>
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<td>Incapable</td>
<td>Capable</td>
<td>Lowdown</td>
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<td>Threatened</td>
<td>Lifeless</td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Sneaky</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Insecure</td>
<td>Tired</td>
<td>Persuasive</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uneasy</td>
<td>Rundown</td>
<td>Sure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shoked</td>
<td>Lazy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Insecure</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Unsatisfied</td>
<td>Secure</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Nervous</td>
<td>Under par</td>
<td>Durable</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worried</td>
<td>Shaky</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timid</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Able</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Soft</td>
<td>Capable</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Lethargic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Personality Words

dependant
aggressive
clueless, innocent
adaptable, flexible
decent, moral
arrogant
attractive
caucustic, harsh, annoying
open-minded
upright, sincere, proper
crazy, flipped-out
talented, gifted
excited, enthusiastic, psyched
popular
comfortable, relaxed
modest, humble
demented, crazy
ignorant, stupid
well-behaved, good
charming
cool

self-centered
ambitious
honest
jealous
conceited, arrogant
very mean, detestable
gross, disgusting
elegant, classy
touchy, sensitive
committed, dedicated
narrow-minded
successful
serious
fair
lazy
cowardly
fine, refined
solid, strong, unchanging
hard-working, industrious
advanced
saucy,
smart-alecky
kind, friendly
happy
caring
hospitalable, generous
patient
dangerous
sensitive,
witty, brilliant
rude,
pleasant
brilliant, genius
clever, skillful
closed, reserved
talkative
social, friendly
greedy
credible, believable
generous
stubborn
hard-head, stubborn

cheerful
uninhibited, unworried
wonderful, magnificent
heartless
deceitful, tricky
haughty, proud
snooty, stuck up
polite
idealistic
smart
intolerant
cold, unfriendly
childish
petty, nit-picky
clever, smart
complicated
outgoing
strong
creative
critical
boring
lazy, sluggish
moody, changing
loud
airheaded, shallow
passionate, serious
mistrustful
courageous
careless, negligent
nervous
curious
depressed
superficial, shallow
optimistic
orderly
embarrassing
pessimistic
practical
radical, revolutionary
refined, elegant
rough
rebellious
always must be right
honest, has integrity
rich
mature
religious
correct, proper
romantic
inconsiderate
considerate
calm
angry, sour
messy, dirty
clever, tricky
shy
weak, poor
awkward
depressed, melancholic
self-confident
sensitive
carefree, untroubled
careful
spontaneous
athletic
sweet, nice
likable, friendly
sad
independant
untroubled, worry-free
unpredictable
inflexible
inexperienced
disobedient
clumsy, unskillful
impolite, rude
responsible
uptight, mean, spiteful
dependable
embarrassed
trustworthy
confused
spoiled (brat)
absent-minded, confused
together
reliable
Reflection and Evaluation

Reflection takes place throughout the dramatic process. Drama students should constantly be looking closely at their work and considering the positives and negatives of their performance creations. Evaluation at the end of a piece of work is valuable to help towards future performances and also shows the ability to understand what good drama is.

Therefore in drama reflection is shown in logging and in final evaluations.

The following pages will give guides for going about reflection in your DW. They are guides only. Reflection is a personal journey and it is important that you find the best way for you to reflect.
What is reflection?
The following is taken from a handout on reflection in general. Reflection is useful in all walks of life so it is good to develop these skills in drama.

Key elements
Reflection is a type of thinking associated with deep thought, aimed at achieving better understanding. It contains a mixture of elements, such as:

1. Making sense of experience
   We don’t always learn from experiences. Reflection is where we analyse experience, actively attempting to ‘make sense’ or find the meaning in it.

2. ‘Standing back’
   It can be hard to reflect when we are caught up in an activity. ‘Standing back’ gives a better view or perspective on an experience, issue or action.

3. Repetition
   Reflection involves ‘going over’ something, often several times, in order to get a broad view and check nothing is missed.

4. Deeper honesty
   Reflection is associated with ‘striving after truth’. Through reflection, we can acknowledge things that we find difficult to admit in the normal course of events.

5. ‘Weighing up’
   Reflection involves being even-handed, or balanced in judgement. This means taking everything into account, not just the most obvious.

6. Clarity
   Reflection can bring greater clarity, like seeing events reflected in a mirror. This can help at any stage of planning, carrying out and reviewing activities.

7. Understanding
   Reflection is about learning and understanding on a deeper level. This includes gaining valuable insights that cannot be just ‘taught’.

8. Making judgements
   Reflection involves an element of drawing conclusions in order to move on, change or develop an approach, strategy or activity.

YOU WILL BE ASKED TO REFLECT IN YOUR DEVELOPMENTAL WORKBOOK ON MANY ASPECTS OF DRAMA.
For instance:
- Effectiveness of performances
- Believability
- Class work
- Group cohesion
- Effort
- What you have learnt from an activity
- Effectiveness of activities in aiding you in developing performance
- Use of voice body, movement, space
- Other’s feedback and your opinion of it
- Decisions you’ve made and why you think they are good choices
- Ability to get into role
- Things that are going well in the preparation for an assignment
- Things that need to be developed in your performance
- Things you’ve observed about others work, if it inspires you, or if it reminds you of things to look out for in performance
Logging or Journal Writing.

The things you could write about
Logging is an important record of the reflection process. It is where you are asked to write entries about each day’s activities in drama. You should log, if not each lesson/day at least each week. Check down this list of things to include in your logging.

What did you do today?
Give a brief outline of the day’s activities and then go into further detail using the prompts below.

Warm ups
The activity and what it was intended for/what it helps you out with/ (e.g. focus, team work, spontaneity, energy, voice, body, movement, emotion)

Any Other Activities
(e.g. role on the wall, hot seating) Record what your teacher asks you to record.
Reflect on how this has helped you to get into role/understand something about the role.

Your Rehearsal Time
It is not intended that you write about each of the following points every day. This is just for you to reflect on when you are logging. Have a look through and see if anything has come to you during your rehearsal.

- Anything you have realised about your character or the storyline/action of the play, the theatre form you are studying
- Any questions/difficulties you still have about playing the character/creating the drama/theatre form
- Decisions you have made and reasons for the decisions
- Significant development of the performance
- Things you are happy about/ not so happy about.

These things can be dependant on the type of process you are involved in (creating character, scripted drama, devising, using a theatre form)

For example:
- Any “Oh, I get it” moments.
- If you have realised how they feel at a particular point.
- Any conventions you added to the work and why
- Any conventions you re-evaluated, changed in some way and why
- If you work out how someone else is reacting to you, that may have helped you know how you act towards them.
- Any deepening of understanding of how it would have been to be them at the time.
- If you’ve worked out how to say a specific line, that had you puzzled before.
- Any moments where you think tension is required
- A moment where you feel you’ve made a good choice for use of techniques
- Decisions on where you will move, stand, sit, to show the characters’ feelings/personality.
- Difficulties you faced and how you overcame them
- If you worked something out about how a scene could run smoother
- Change of dialogue and why
- A convention you added that you thought was a good idea
- Something your group has decided that you aren’t sure is effective.
- If there was a moment in the rehearsal where you feel you really stepped into role. Note how it felt or how you got there.
- If you realise what it was like at the time of the play, which may be different to today’s world and may affect your character.

Give reasons: a decision means little if it isn’t justified.
Always ask yourself: WHY?

- Give yourself a mark out of ten, and then give a reason for your grade.
- Give your group a mark out of ten, and then a reason for your grade.

You should think about how well you got through what you had set on your rehearsal schedule for the day.

Do not neglect the power of pictures to help you log, when pictures are used and captioned well they can tell a lot about what you have done.
Some Things to Look for in Yours and Other’s Performances:

**Performance in general:**
- Do you believe the actors?
- Can you feel the tension in the scene?
- Does it make an impact/have an effect on the audience?
- Is the action/acting appropriate to the topic/character?
- Is the use of voice, body, movement, space expressive and/or varied? Or if you are in older grades is the subtlety of human emotion/personality evident?
- Do the actors interact well with each other?
- Do the scenes flow nicely?
- Are the characters fully developed?
- Do the actors consider the character’s relationships?
- Do the characters grow and change throughout?
- Do you connect with the characters?
- Do the audience laugh in moments that are not necessarily intended to be funny? Eg. Is the audience reaction different from the intended effect?

**For reflection of devised performances:**
- Is the story clear?
- Is the storyline interesting? Are there any unnecessary pieces? Are there any questions that are not answered for you? Is the performance creative in its presentation of the story, considering ways of structuring the story to build the elements of the performance effectively?
- Is the dialogue useful? Does it make sense?
- Are the conventions chosen useful? What do they add to the performance?
- Does/do the scene/scenes develop a concept/idea?
- Is the set useful and effective?
- Are the characters sustained throughout the performance?
### Drama Evaluation Writing Frame

You could use the following to reflect on a performance you have seen. Use this only as a guide, never as the be all and end all of reflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Useful Starters</th>
<th>Useful Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Introduction</td>
<td>I thought ....................... was effective because of the way they................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Tension</td>
<td>The scene had a strong impact because of the use of .................................</td>
<td>build tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If he/she/I had used ........................... it would have been more effective because</td>
<td>increase tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>................................................</td>
<td>develop a scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The tension was built by ..................</td>
<td>enhance a scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Components</td>
<td>The staging was effective because ............................................................</td>
<td>use space</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>................................................</td>
<td>set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They/we/I could have improved the staging by..............................................</td>
<td>colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The space could have been used more effectively, for example........................</td>
<td>set up</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The use of lighting enhanced the scene because it .......................................</td>
<td>levels</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The costumes were effective in ................ for example ............................</td>
<td>furniture</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The props aided the performance by ........</td>
<td>mood</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>is made effective</td>
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<td>by</td>
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<td></td>
<td>show character</td>
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<td>imagination</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stereotype</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Characters</td>
<td>The dramatist created a credible character because of his/her use of ................</td>
<td>create a character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Acting</td>
<td>for example, when he/she.............................. She/he could have created a more</td>
<td>physicality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>believable character if she/he had/hadn't ...............................................</td>
<td>facial expressions</td>
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<td>focus</td>
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<td>concentration</td>
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<td>vocal skills</td>
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<td>movement</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>space use</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Dialogue</td>
<td>The dialogue was very effective because................................................................</td>
<td>believable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The dialogue would have been more ....................................................................</td>
<td>credible</td>
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<td>..............................................................................................................</td>
<td>realistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Convention</td>
<td>The use of the convention .............. was effective because ........................</td>
<td>Validity</td>
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<td>use</td>
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<td>Information</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Emotive</td>
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<td>Stylistic</td>
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<td>Relate</td>
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<td>Give an impact</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thought</td>
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<td>provoking</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. Impact upon</td>
<td>The performance was trying to .......................................................................</td>
<td>Make a comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Audience</td>
<td>It was effective/not effective in conveying this because ................................</td>
<td>on society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teach a lesson</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Suggest something</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Make the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>audience feel a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>certain way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Conclusion</td>
<td>Overall, ............................... was/wasn't effective because....................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It would have been more effective if...........</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Reflection: Watching a Performance

- Look out for particular use of techniques (voice body, movement, space) used to create character, or emotion. (Several moments). Be able to describe in detail the use of the technique.
  
  eg. Voice: pitch, pace, pause, inflection, body: posture, tension, stance, movement: speed, weight, legs, arms, direction, percussive, sustained, space: distance, closeness, levels, personal, general

  Why you chose this moment as a good/bad example of technique. What it highlights about the character or the intensity of emotion.

- Think about what the performance might be saying to its audience. It could be a reflection of society or a reaction against it.

- What was the play trying to say to you? What was it trying to make you think? How did they make this obvious?

- Note the set. Is it obvious where they are? How does it do this? Are there any special features that tell us about the story, the people, the style of performance?

- Look out for specific moments when the lights, set, costume highlight a mood, or focus on a person. Be able to describe how this is done. Think about why this is.

- Were you entertained by the play? Being entertaining does not necessarily mean it was funny.

- Was the tension in the performance evident?

- How did the conventions or components of drama help to create a strong performance?

- What did not impress you?

- Did the performance flow smoothly?

- Were the actors in role? Did they work well together? Could they be heard? Seen?

- Was there some variety in the performance?

---

So for instance:

- In the performance of The Crucible, the actor playing Elizabeth used the process of voice effectively. She deepened her voice and took on a lower tone, speaking slowly when she was shocked/horrified at being accused of the crime of witchcraft. She then had a shrill voice at a high pitch and very loud as she became hysterical about Abigail accusing her. She also had moments where her lines broke off and she was very breathy as if about to cry, but holding it in.

- The lighting was effective in The Crucible. At the beginning the children were portrayed dancing late at night in the forest. The lighting was very dark, with a touch of blue on the girls, enough to light them up, this added to the wickedness that was dancing in the forest for the people of these times. It also hints at the evil to take over their town. At times of tension the scenes would take on a red light, so for instance when Elizabeth and John become extremely angry with each other. This heightens their mood by showering them in the colour of blood and hatred. In a later scene the red light is used to highlight the devilish side of the stage with the horrid Abigail and the leaders of the court who are in the wrong standing on one side of the stage bathed in red, whilst on the other side the truthful side have a slight blue light on them. This shows their despair as they are being put down by the others. At the end of Act 2 John Proctor is left almost alone in his house as his wife is taken off to jail. As he vows to help her the lights begin to turn an amber colour to show his pain and anguish, they fade showing him falling almost into despair as he realises what he must do. This is reflected at the end of the play when Elizabeth, Proctor's wife, is left standing on stage as the lights dim, we see the stage darken as she sinks into despair at the loss of her husband, though it is almost triumphant, with the slight amber glow to the ending light. (you won't have to write quite this much, it's covering quite a bit.)