

## The Drama calendar

Keeping a record of events, cross-curricular work, productions, visits, workshops, etc, is essential for the Drama handbook and for OFSTED. The record should also be displayed in several areas of the school so that staff, pupils and visitors are aware of the various activities taking place. This provides another opportunity to show that Drama is more than just the school production, but a subject contributing greatly to the teaching and learning styles of the school.

By monitoring the calendar the teacher will be aware of any imbalances. For example, there may be three projects for one year group and only one for another. When planning activities for the next year the teacher can consult the calendar and address any imbalances.

**Master 12** (page 20) provides an outline calendar for completion. The example below shows how it might be completed:

<b>Drama Calendar</b>		Year
January	Year 11 visit London to see <i>Les Miserables</i> . Drama/Geography project on open-cast mining.	
February	Auditions and Rehearsals of Year 7/8 production of <i>Classroom Bullies</i> . Year 10 workshop presentation on Loyalty to Year 9.	
March	Drama/History project on World War One.	
April	Cross Arts project on Litter for Year 8. GCSE Drama files collected for moderation.	
May	Year 10 view final Drama pieces of Year 11. GCSE Drama Examination, Rehearsed Presentation.	
June	Year 10 taken to Stratford.	

## 4 Discipline

As well as the school or classroom rules, Drama needs its own specific rules. The teachers in the department should agree on a basic set appropriate to their establishment. This code of behaviour should be displayed. **Master 13** (page 25) provides an example of a basic set of rules.

### Prior indicators

The Drama teacher's voice is their most important asset so it is necessary to organise methods of saving the voice. The problem of being heard over a loud working noise can be overcome by setting up prior indicators. Students are taught to recognise and respond to signals from the teacher. These signals indicate that a role-play is about to begin, a particular rule is to be followed, there is going to be a presentation, the teacher wishes to speak to the students, etc. The prior indicators are taught to the students before their Drama work commences.

There are three types of prior indicators:

- signals
- statements
- pick ups.

### Signals

Without speaking the teacher gives a signal. For example:

**Indicator:** The teacher claps several times and then draws a circle in the air with their index finger.

**Response:** The students sit in a circle on their chairs.

Not all students react immediately. Allow time for the message to filter through. The trick is for the teacher to position themselves in a place so that some of the students see the signal. Once some of them react to the instruction, others will follow. By using the signal and not calling out the teacher will have the students sat in a circle ready to receive instructions.

### Statements

The teacher speaks directly to the class from a position where the students can hear. As the students have been taught the function of the indicator, they will respond. Again allow time for the message to filter through.

For example:

**Indicator:** The teacher calls 'Positions', 'Cue'.

**Response:** Some students perform their improvisation, while the rest of the class watches.

It is worth allowing up to 10 seconds between the words 'Positions' and 'Cue'.

### Pick up

Here the students react immediately to the teacher. In this sort of situation the teacher may ask a student in role some questions about their character's thoughts, motivation, etc (thought in the head). The teacher may briefly adopt a role to help the student with their answers, eg the student may be in role as a motorist and the teacher adopts the role of a police officer. Students quickly become used to the teacher in role and the thought in the head technique. For example:

**Indicator:** The teacher asks a question.

**Response:** The students replies in role.

Examples of prior indicators are given on **Master 14** (page 26). It could be used as a handout for students.

## Discipline policy

Each school will have its own discipline policy. The discipline of the Drama department should be a part of it yet at the same time attempt to deal with specific problems.

One system is the five star merit system where students are awarded merit stars for good work. Demerit stars are given for behaviour which causes concern. The teacher keeps a note of the stars in the register. Merit stars are marked to the right of the student's name and demerits to the left. Teachers will find it easier to simply mark with a dot. On obtaining five merits the student is awarded a Drama commendation (or some suitable award appropriate to the school discipline policy). If a student has collected a demerit then they would need six merits before they achieve a Drama commendation.

An example of a register showing this system is given on page 23.

## Interview questions

- 1 Why do you want to teach Drama, it's not a National Curriculum subject?  
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- 2 What do you think your strengths are as a Drama teacher at the moment?  
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- 3 If you were appointed to this post what would your immediate ambitions be?  
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- 4 Can you outline a Drama project that you have created or been involved in?  
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- 5 Can you tell us about one of the best moments/worse moments in your teaching career so far?  
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- 6 What do you think Drama has in common with the other Arts?  
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- 7 Should Drama have any sort of relationship with other subjects taught in school?  
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- 8 Have you been involved in any extra-curricular activities?  
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- 9 How can Drama contribute to the ethos of the school?  
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- 10 Which Drama practitioners/writers have influenced you so far? What have you learned from them?  
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- 11 How does Drama fit with Information Technology?  
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