

Year 8 Spring term Drama Knowledge Organiser

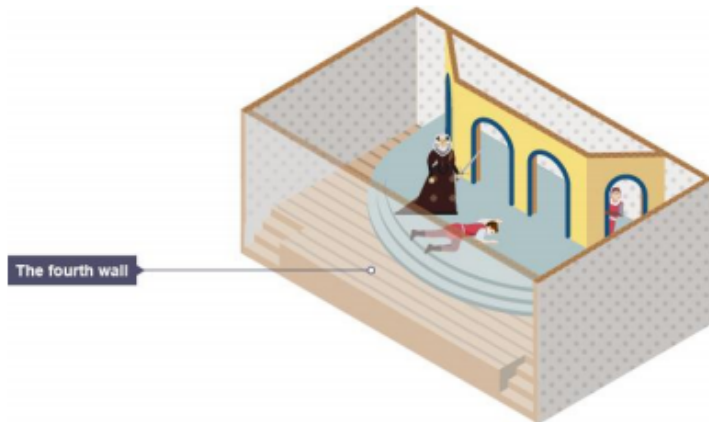
REALISM IN THEATRE- Conventions

The fourth wall. The set of a realistic production will be solid, three dimensional, and most often in a proscenium theatre that enhances the sense of that fourth wall. The performers present the action realistically, without using techniques such as addressing the audience or a tableau, which immediately shatter any illusion of real life being played out.

Everyday conversations and style of speaking. A realistic play would use prose rather than poetry and would use ordinary language, rather than a heightened emotional vocabulary.

Ordinary people. Generally, the stories are about people who are more readily defined as middle or working class.

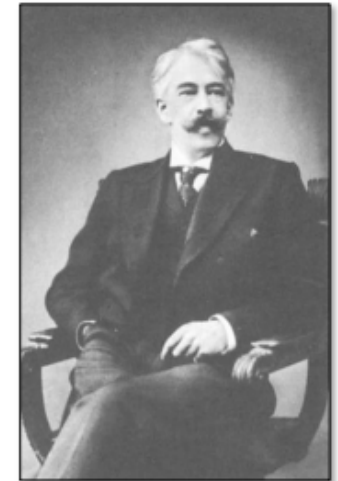
Real settings. These plays are set in realistic contexts. They won't have fairy tale or fantasy settings and are likely to be contemporary. There'll come a time when such a play, one by Chekhov, for instance, is no longer contemporary. It then becomes a directorial decision as to what to do. But most productions of Chekhov are set in their original period with as much realistic integrity in the production as can be created.



KEY PRACTITIONER- STANISLAVSKI

Stanislavski was a key practitioner of the Realism/Naturalism movement in the 19th Century. His theatre tried to reflect real life and he would teach his actors to present their characters as believably as possible.

The Magic If- Stanislavski would ask his actors to think about the following question: **What would I do if I was in this situation?** He hoped that this would help them to understand their character's motivation.



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Performance Skills- In your exam you will be shown a scene from a play that you have studied. You must then describe how you would perform in the scene, using accurate terminology.

The importance of voice

Your voice can be used to present your character's feelings and emotions. There are many ways that you can use your voice such as:

- Varying the pace (speed) of your voice
- Changing the pitch
- Using emphasis and pause to draw the audience's attention to certain words or lines
- You could use an accent to help show where your character is from.

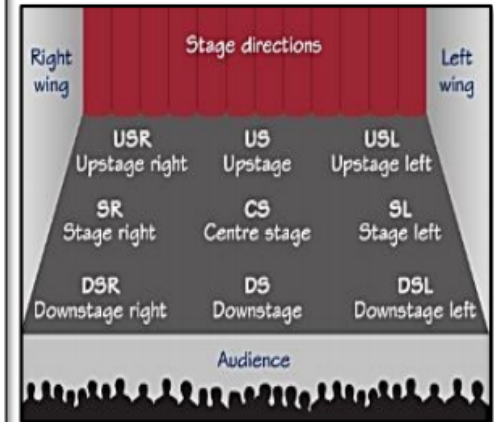
The use of Proxemics in Performance

Proxemics, or spatial positioning, needs careful consideration from the director. This is about where a performer should stand in relation to other performers and any objects in a scene. Proxemics:

is closely linked to blocking and the representation of relationships

can have a powerful impact on what the audience understands about the message and emotions on stage

requires consideration of what the audience can see. Carefully planned sightlines can give the audience a lot of contextual information.



Using Tone

Tone is not about what is said but how it is said. It is vital for showing meaning and emotion, providing the **context** for each of the words.

Using Intonation

Intonation is about the performer making their voice sound interesting and engaging. It is particularly important when delivering long speeches.

A performer's use of gesture

A **gesture** is a way of expressing a character's thoughts or emotions and often works together with **body language**. **Gestures** can reflect an action and can be an instant way of communicating.

Gestures:

- ✓ can help to sum up how a character feels at any given moment in the production. A character shaking a fist, for example, may convey a great deal to the audience without the need for words.
- ✓ can be **socially, culturally or historically** significant.

A performer's use of facial expression

Facial expression is a powerful way of communicating with the audience. Humans are capable of making 10,000 unique facial expressions with just 43 muscles in the face.

Facial expressions can be grouped into seven basic emotions:

- ✓ Fear
- ✓ Sadness
- ✓ Happiness
- ✓ Anger
- ✓ Contempt
- ✓ Disgust
- ✓ Surprise