Pearson

Hampshire Drama Conference

October 2026

This session will focus on:

- Edexcel GCSE Drama
- BTEC Tech Award in Performing Arts

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GCSE Drama: Reflecting on 2025/2026

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GCSE Drama Component 1: Devising

Choice of stimuli:

- Pictures (most popular choice)
- Literary
- Music / Songs
- Video
- Quotes
- Poems
- News articles

Popular themes:

- Power & Manipulation
- Discrimination
- Social Divides
- Social Media and the Impact
- Mental Health
- Technological Changes
- Inequality
- War
- County Lines and Gang Culture
- Bullying
- Body Image

GCSE Drama 2026 Principal Moderator Report

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GCSE Drama Component 1: Devising

Portfolio

Good Practice

- cover the six questions and essential areas of coverage
- make full use of the word count/ timings to allow for the detail of analysis required
- include Health and Safety considerations into their working practices and their Portfolio
- Avoid general discussion and a diary like approach
- use drama terminology to clearly explain and analyse the ‘drama’ that took place when devising, rehearsing and refining and realising
- stay focused on their performance/ design skill throughout the Portfolio
- Use the first person

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GCSE Drama Component 1: Devising

Portfolio

Production and Structure

Students should be working on producing their portfolio throughout the **entire devising process**.

Questions 1 and 2 are the early stages of the **devising process** and **exploration of stimulus** such as using still images, hot seating, forum theatre etc.

Questions 3 and 4 focus on **refinements** and **rehearsals**, and are key to achieving higher AO1 levels and marks. There should be a clear focus on **characterisation, genre, style, structure** and **language.**

Questions 5 and 6 focus on their **skills in the final performance** and are key to achieving high AO4 levels/marks.

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GCSE Drama Component 1: Devising

Performance

Good Practice

- Ensure the work is carefully rehearsed and polished for performance with a focus on creativity and impact on the audience.
- Engage fully with their role, thinking about how their role impacts the work as a whole.
- Work collaboratively and actively contribute to the exploration, refinement and rehearsal process.
- Shape and develop ideas practically rather than repeating and polishing without progression.
- Use their research skills to inform their performance and the development of ideas.
- Make clear notes, including examples, throughout the process and reflect on their final performance straight after the performance takes place.

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GCSE Drama Component 2: Performance from Text

Popular Monologues:

- A Taste of Honey by Shelagh Delaney
- Adult Child, Dead Child by Claire Dowie
- Be My Baby by Amanda Whittington
- Blood Brothers by Willy Russell
- Educating Rita by Willy Russell
- Electricity by Miriam Battye
- Five Kinds of Silence by Shelagh Stephenson
- Game Over by Mark Wheeller
- I Think We Are Alone by Sally Abbott
- John Lennon Wearing a Skirt by Claire Dowie
- Living with Lady Macbeth by Rob John
- Monsters by Niklas Rådström
- The Collector by John Fowles
- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Simon Stephens



Principal Examiner Report 2026

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GCSE Drama Component 2: Performance from Text

Popular Duologues:

- A Taste of Honey by Shelagh Delaney
- Blood Brothers by Willy Russell
- Car by Aidan Chambers
- Chatroom by Enda Walsh
- Girls Like That by Evan Placey
- How to Think the Unthinkable by Ryan Craig
- Living with Lady Macbeth by Rob John
- My Mother Said I Never Should by Charlotte Keatley
- Our Day Out by Willy Russell
- The Almighty Sometimes by Kendall Feaver
- The Collector by John Fowles
- The Long Road by Shelagh Stephenson
- The Unreturning by Anna Jordan
- The Zoo Story by Edward Albee



Principal Examiner Report 2026

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GCSE Drama Component 2: Performance from Text

Popular Group Texts:

- Teechers / Bouncers / Shakers by John Godber and Jane Thornton
- Girls Like That by Evan Placey
- The Pillowman by Martin McDonagh
- Find Me by Olwen Wymark
- Five Kinds of Silence by Shelagh Stephenson
- 4:48 Psychosis by Sarah Kane
- Be My Baby by Amanda Whittington
- My Mother Said I Never Should by Charlotte Keatley
- The Memory of Water by Shelagh Stephenson
- The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband by Debbie Isitt
- Things I Know To Be True by Andrew Bovell

Popular texts used with **designers** were:

- Blood Brothers by Willy Russell
- Girls Like That by Evan Placey
- Two by Jim Cartwright
- Adult Child, Dead Child by Claire Dowie
- Agnes of God by John Pielmeier

Principal Examiner Report 2026

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GCSE Drama Component 2: Performance from Text

Characteristics of high scoring performance work

- Key factor for success = level of preparation
- Students really understood the character they were playing
- Control over and appreciation of the chosen style, applying it with security and ease
- Believable and committed characters
- Vocal and physical skills are fluid and show range and depth

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GCSE Drama Component 2: Performance from Text

Characteristics of high scoring design work

- Confident understanding of the texts and the performances they were studying
- Lighting students understood the subtleties of how lighting can enhance the performance
- Imagination and detail in the completion of the design
- Clearly had worked with the performance candidates
- Costumes that showed clearly creative approaches to character enhancement

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GCSE Drama Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice

Principal Examiner Report 2026

Section A: Bringing Texts to Life

1DR0 3A

- *An Inspector Calls*, J B Priestley – 3 examples
- *The Crucible*, Arthur Miller – 3 examples
- *A Doll's House*, Tanika Gupta – 4 examples
- *Antigone*, Roy Williams – 1 example
- *Government Inspector,* David Harrower - 3 examples

1DR0 3B

- *DNA,* Dennis Kelly – 4 examples
- *100,* Diene Petterle, Neil Monaghan and Christopher Heimann – 2 examples
- *Blue Stockings,* Jessica Swale – 3 examples
- *1984,* Robert Icke and Duncan McMillan – 4 examples
- *Gone Too Far*, Bola Agbaje – 2 examples

Section B:

Questions are the same for both lists.

Examiner report includes responses to:

- *The Woman in Black*
- *Macbeth*
- *Prima Facie*
- *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*

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GCSE Drama

Component 3: Section B

Forbidden productions- no set texts!

Forbidden texts

Sung Through Musicals** including, but not limited to:

American Idiot
A New Brain
Aspects of Love
Bare
Bumblescratch
Caroline, or Change
Cats
Charlotte Sweet
Chess
Come From Away
Evita
Falsettos
Goblin Market
Hadestown
Hamilton
Here Lies Love
Jekyll and Hyde
Jesus Christ Superstar
Joseph Amazing Techicolour Dreamcoat
Les Misérables
Little by Little
Marry Me A Little
Miss Saigon
Movin' Out
Murder Ballad
Next To Normal
Ordinary Days
Quadrophenia
Ragtime
Rent
Six
Song and Dance
Songs For New World
Spring Awakening
Starlight Express
Suffs
Sunset Boulevard
Sweeney Todd
Tell Me on a Sunday
The Last Five Years
The Phantom Of The Opera
The Woman In White
Tommy
Umbrellas of Cherbourg

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2026/2027 Academic Year Key dates and updates

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GCSE Drama qualification page

Edexcel GCSE Drama (2016) | Pearson qualifications

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
Drama (2016)

Performance text approval form 2026/2027 Submit your performance text and set text choices › **Learn more**

Specification



DOWNLOAD

PDF | 1.5 MB

Teaching from: September 2016

External assesment from: 2018

Availability: UK and International

Here, you'll find everything you need to prepare for GCSE Drama from 2016, including our Edexcel GCSE (9–1) Drama specification, sample assessment materials and support materials.

Our specification offers:

- inspiring creativity and confidence
- clear and straightforward assessments
- supports progression and develops transferable skills
- a practical focus at heart

Planning on teaching this qualification or already delivering?

Let us know today and we'll make sure you have the latest news and support to guide you through your teaching.

› Get in touch

Course materials

- **› Specification and sample assessments (4)**
- **› Exam materials (65)**
- **› Forms and administration (11)**
- **› Teaching and learning materials (93)**



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2026/2027 Key dates at a glance

Event	Date	Key information
Submission of Component 2 text choices	Online Text Submission Form 1 September 2026 to 6 March 2027	Submit online text submission form at least six weeks before the planned Component 2 assessment date.
Component 1 mark submission and moderation window	15 April to 15 May 2027	Submit teacher assessed marks for all candidates to Edexcel Online. Submit moderation sample through Learner Work Transfer. The final deadline is 15 May 2027.
Component 2 assessment window	4 January to 30 April 2027*	*Live visits available from 1 February – 30 April. Digital submission from 4 January – 30 April. Upload all assessment materials to Learner Work Transfer (LWT) within 7 working days after the final assessment date (closes 12 May 2027). Refer to Component 2 guidance for submission instructions and requirements.
Component 3 examination	Friday 14 May 2027 (PM)	Centres must ensure the correct entry code is used for either 1DR0/3A or 1DR0/3B. Candidates complete Live Theatre Notes Form to be attached to Live Theatre Notes
Live Theatre Performance Confirmation	Statement Submission: Before 1 May in year of assessment	Live Theatre Performance Confirmation Survey

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GCSE Drama Approved Play Lists

Performance Text Lists

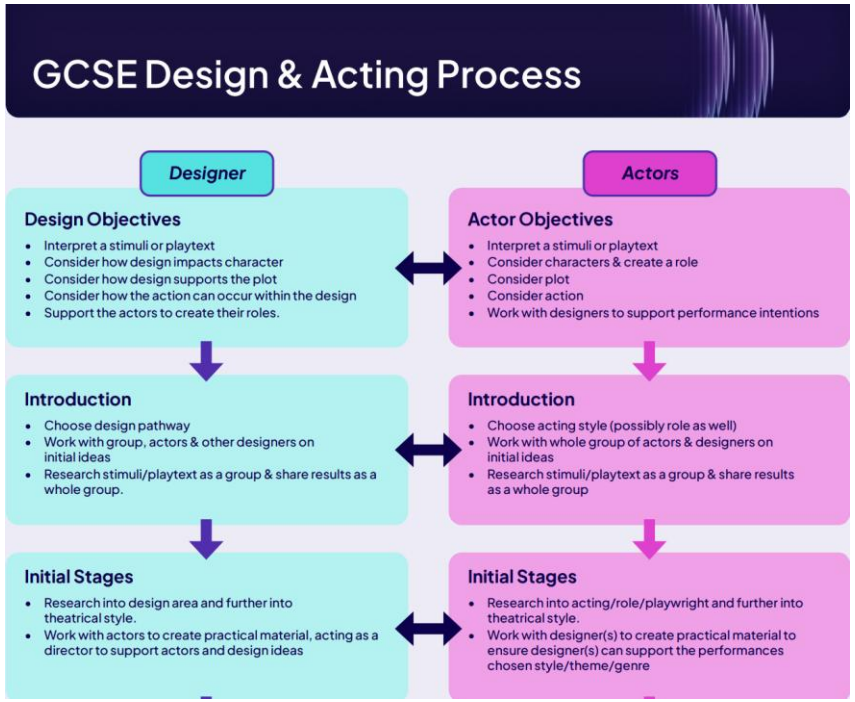


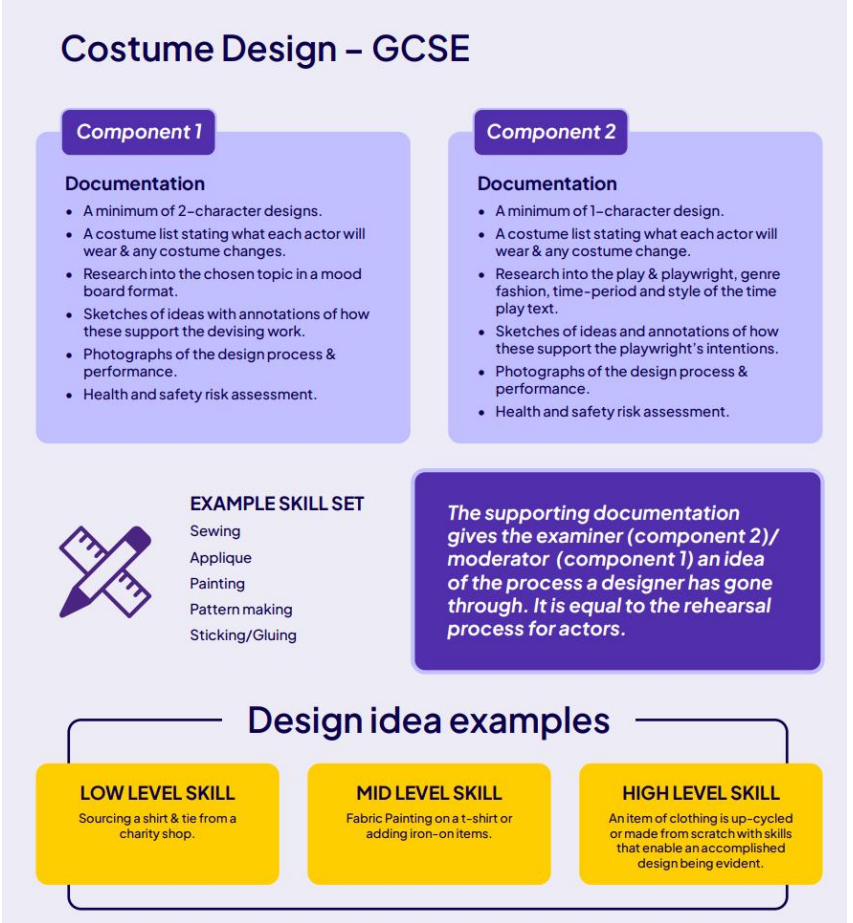
Churchill Caryl	Vinegar Tom	Social Drama	1976
Clapham Peter	Little Women	Social Drama	1986
Clark Brian	Whose Life is it Anyway	Social Drama	1978
Cleago Pearl	Blues for an Alabama Sky	Social Drama	1995
Coleman Elizabeth	Secret Bridesmaid's Business	Comedy	1999
Cookson Catherine	The Fifteen Streets	Drama	1959
Coward Noel	Fallen Angels	Comedy	1925
Coward Noel	Present Laughter	Light Comedy	1943
Coward Noel	Private Lives	Drama	1930
Coward Noel	Blithe Spirit	Comedy	1942
Crimp Martin	Dealing with Clair	Tragedy	1994
Crimp Martin	No One Sees the Video	Verbatim Drama	1992
Crimp Martin	Attempts on her Life	Drama	1997
Crimp Martin	Cyrano De Bergerac	Comedy	1897
Cross Beverley	Boeing-Boeing	Farce	1962
Crowley Mart	The Boys in The Band	Comedy	1968
Dahl Roald	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory	Children/Fantasy	1964
D'Andrea Paul	The Trouble with Europe	Comedy	1981
Daniels Sarah	Head Rot Holiday	Dark Comedy	1991
Daniels Sarah	Masterpieces Dark	Comedy	1983
Daniels Sarah	Taking Breath	Political Drama	1999
Daniels Sarah	The Gut Girls	Drama	1989
Davis Jack	Honey Spot	Drama	1987
Davis Stephen	Juice	Social Drama	1998
de Angelis April	Playhouse Creatures	Dramatic Comedy	1994
de Angelis April	The Positive Hour	Comedy	1997
Deegan Denise	Daisy Pulls It Off	Comedy	1983
Delaney Shelagh	A Taste of Honey	Social Drama	1958
Denfhy Wayne	Heroin Lies	Social Drama	1991
Din Ayub Khan	East s East	Drama	1997
Dorfman Ariel	Death and the Maiden	Drama	1991
Dorfman Ariel	Widows	Drama	1997
Dowie Claire	John Lennon is Wearing a Skirt	Drama	1996
Dowie Claire	Adult Child/Dead Child	Drama	1988
Dowie Claire	Death and Dancing	Comedy	1996
Dowie Claire	Why is John Lennon Wearing a Skirt	Drama	1996
Dowie Claire	All Over Lovely	Feminist Drama	1998
Dryden Ellen	The Power of the Dog	Drama	1996
Duffy Carol Ann	Collected Grimm Tales	Fairytale	1997
Duffy Carol Ann	More Grimm Tales	Fairytale	1997
Dunbar Andrea	Rita, Sue and Bob Too	Comedy	1982
Dunn Nell	Steaming	Comedy	1981
Durang Christopher	Laughing Wild	Comedy	1987
Durang Christopher	The Actor's Nightmare	Comedy	1981
Durrenmatt Friedrich	The Physicists	Comedy	1963

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GCSE Drama Design Support

Design Support

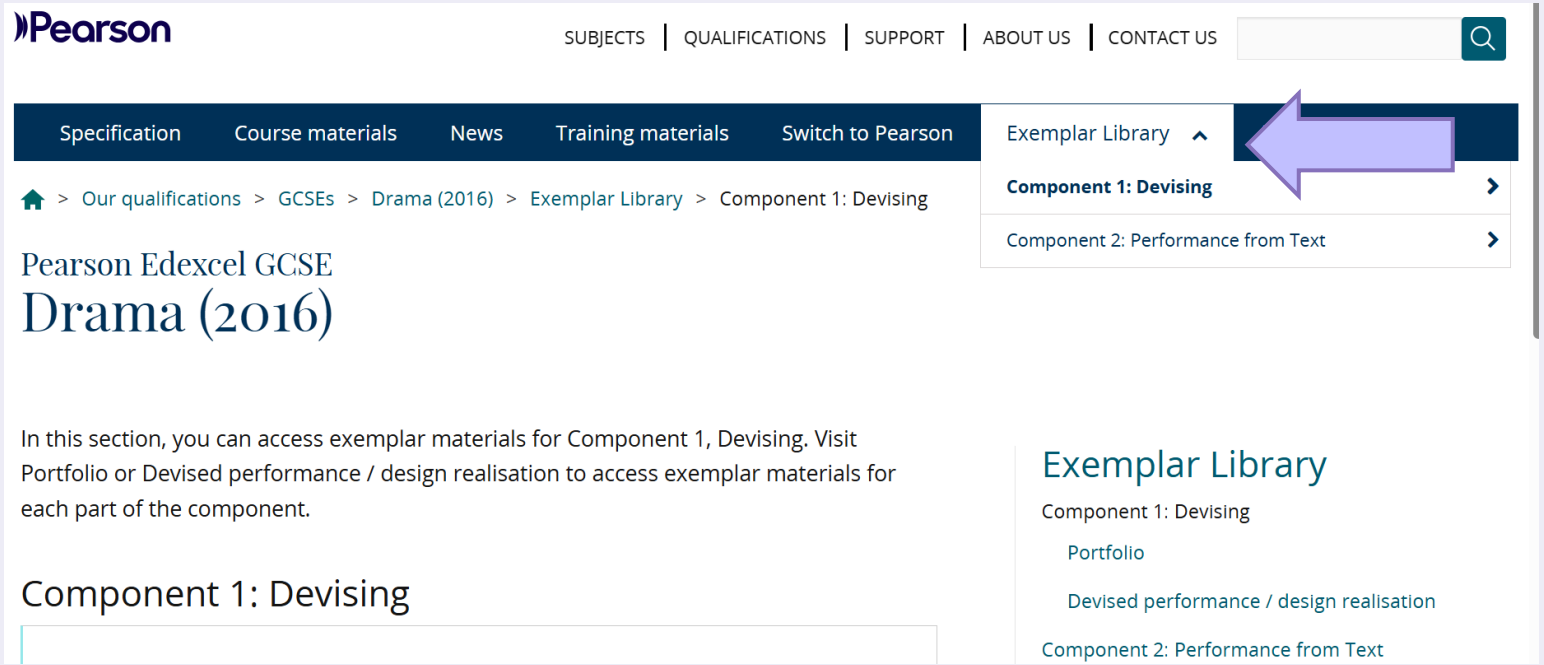


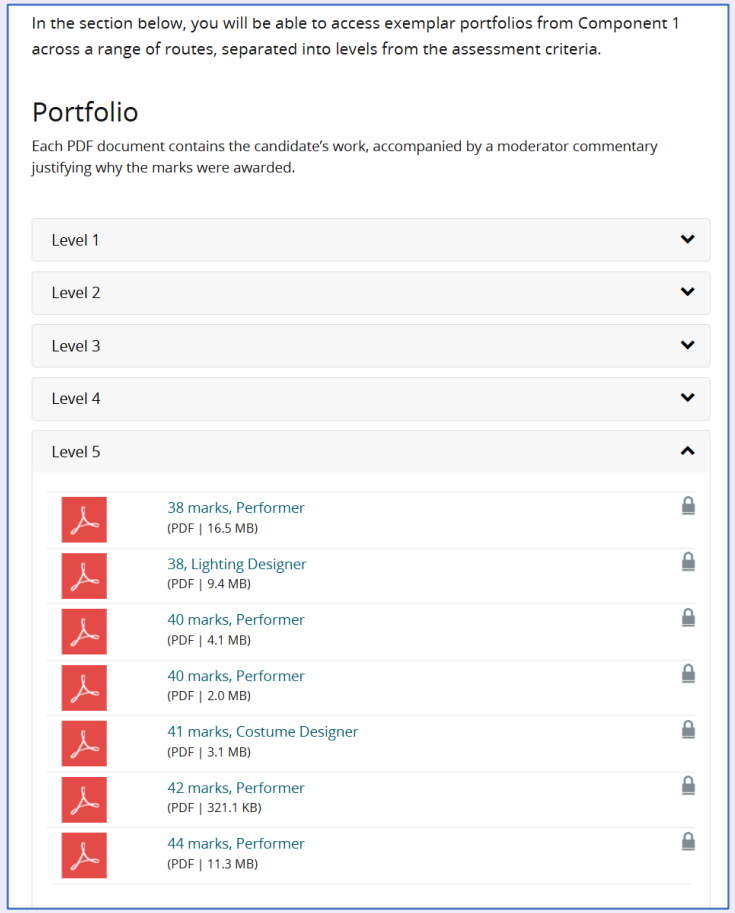


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GCSE Drama Exemplar Library

GCSE Drama Exemplar Library | Pearson qualifications





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Upcoming FREE Professional Development for GCSE Drama

Pearson Professional Development Academy



Free

GCSE Drama: Supporting Students on Design Routes

By Pearson

6 October 2026 at 16:00 – 18:00 BST This free online training is for centres currently offering or considering offering design routes (Costume Design...

2hrs

06-Oct-2026

Live Online



Free

GCSE Drama: Coursework Marking Training – Component 1

By Pearson

11 November 2026 at 16:30 – 18:30 GMT This free online training, delivered by one of our subject specialists, supports teachers delivering Pearson Ed...

2hrs

11-Nov-2026

Live Online



Free

GCSE Drama: Exam Insights Summer 2026

By Pearson

16 November 2026 at 16:30 – 18:30 GMT This training is for teachers of Pearson Edexcel GCSE Drama and provides feedback and insights on the summer...

2hrs

16-Nov-2026

Live Online



Free

GCSE Drama: Preparing for Component 2

By Pearson

19 November 2026 at 16:00 – 18:00 GMT This free online training, delivered by one of our subject specialists, supports teachers delivering Pearson Ed...

2hrs

19-Nov-2026

Live Online



Free

GCSE Drama: Engaging with Purpose – Preparing Students for Component 3 Succ...

By Pearson

1 December 2026 at 16:00 – 17:30 GMT This free online training, delivered by one of our subject specialists, supports teachers delivering Pearson Ede...

1.5hrs

01-Dec-2026

Live Online

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BTEC Tech Award in Performing Arts: reflecting on 25/26

Tech Award Component 3: Responding to a Brief 25-26

Examiner report

Set Task Information

A new community centre is opening. It will serve as a dynamic space where individuals from all walks of life can come together to learn, create, and celebrate. The grand opening of the community centre will include many different performance events.

The performance events will include work from all performing arts disciplines.

The community centre will be a welcoming space that promotes cultural exchange, education, and social cohesion. The grand opening aims to showcase the region's diverse cultural heritage.

You have been commissioned by the community centre to take part in the programme of events. They have set the stimulus for the grand opening as:

'Common Ground'

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Tech Award Component 3: Responding to a Brief 25-26

Examiner report

Activity 1: Ideas Log

Effective responses:

- followed the bullet-point structure provided in the Ideas Log template
- tended to be written once some initial exploration had already taken place, but while the thinking was still fresh and easy to recall
- made explicit links back to the brief throughout the task
- explained how their performance could support the broader aims and were consistently relevant to the wider context
- named professional influences and showed how their practical choices grew directly out of that influence

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Tech Award Component 3: Responding to a Brief 25-26

Examiner report

Activity 2: Skills Log

Effective responses:

- identified which performance skills were needed to bring ideas to life
- explained how they worked to develop those skills and which specific techniques they put into practice
- offered genuine comment on the practical ways skills were adapted and advanced over time
- detailed how everything linked back to the requirements of the brief
- showed a real understanding of how skill development serves the overall artistic intention

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Tech Award Component 3: Responding to a Brief 25-26

Examiner report

Activity 3: Workshop Performance

Strong responses:

- fully addressed the demands of the brief
- showcased competent performance skills
- clearly communicated appropriate creative intentions
- Dance: Choreography reflected ideas such as friendship, belonging and bringing people together through effective use of unison, partner work and group formations. Clear focus throughout and engaged the audience in a positive and uplifting way
- Acting: included clear vocal delivery, physical characterisation, and the ability to remain in role with focus and emotional authenticity
- Design: often using warm colours, shared community spaces and inclusive visual imagery. Demonstrated how design choices would create an inviting atmosphere and enhance the overall performance for a community audience.

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Tech Award Component 3: Responding to a Brief 25-26

Examiner report

Activity 4: Evaluation Report

Effective responses:

- clear connections back to the brief
- identified specific strengths and areas for development in detail
- drew on concrete examples from the finished work and showed how far the brief had been met, or where it had fallen short
- examined the group's development process alongside the final outcome, making thorough links to the brief throughout

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2026/2027 Academic Year Key dates and updates

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Pearson Set Assignments

Key dates 26-27

Tech Award
Registering your students: 2 pathways available, 2 discount codes

Components 1 and 2

Pearson Set Assignment (PSA) Jan 27	Pearson Set Assignment (PSA) Jun 27
1st June PSAs released	7th Sept PSAs released
15th Dec Submitted for moderation	15th May Submitted for moderation
Entries made for Performance (A), Production (B) or on the Dance Pathway	Entries made for Performance (A), Production (B) or on the Dance Pathway

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Pearson Set Assignments

PSAs



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Key events and information for 2026-27

Component 3: Responding to a Brief

- Tasks released 11th January 2027

Secure tests

- Tasks need to be completed by 5th May 2027

C3 Admin Support Guide

- Submitted for external assessment by 14th May 2027

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Training and support 26-27

Book a training event

Tech Award recordings

Tech Award in Performing Arts training events this term:

- Getting Started: Ways to Teach and Assess Tech Award in Performing Arts
- Marking and Moderation for Internally Assessed Components: Component 1
- Marking and Moderation for Internally Assessed Components: Component 2
- Preparing For Component 3

Tech Award training playlist on Youtube:

- Getting Started: Ways to Teach and Assess Tech Award in Performing Arts
- Marking and Moderation for Internally Assessed Components: Component 1
- Marking and Moderation for Internally Assessed Components: Component 2
- Preparing For Component 3

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Exemplar material 26-27

Comp 1 PM report June 26

Exemplar Standardisation Materials

Tech Award Performing Arts

Component 1: 5 examples of band 4 work contained in PM report for June 26

- Shrek the Musical
- Billy Elliott
- Frankenstein
- Things I Know to be True
- The Curious incident of the Dog in the Nighttime

Component 2: later this term

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Component 1: Exploring the Performing Arts

Blood Brothers
The Lion King
The Curious incident of the Dog in the Nighttime
Hamilton
Frankenstein
West Side Story
Things I Know to be True
DNA
Message in a Bottle
Dear Evan Hansen
Mamma Mia
Peaky Blinders
Frankenstein
Everybody's Talking about Jamie
Madhatter's Tea Party

Comp 1 PM report

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Component 2: Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts

Dance

All that Jazz/ Chicago
Alvin Ailey – Revelations
Big God
Cinderella (Bourne)
Cry Me A River (Winghart)
Emancipation of Expressionism
Everybody's Talking about Jamie
Edward ScissorHands (Bourne)
Ghost Dances
Hairspray
Hamilton
Mad Hatter's Tea party
Matilda
Message In A Bottle
Peaky Blinders
The Red Shoes
Rhythm Nation
Rosa Danst Rosa

Performing Arts

A Midsummer Night's Dream
A Monster Calls
Blood Brothers
Bouncers
Cookies
The Crucible
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time
DNA
Everybody's Talking about Jamie
Find Me
Girls Like That
Hairspray
Hamilton

Comp 2 PM report

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Component 3 support and resources

Exemplars

BPD03/01 Dance

High Mark (47 Marks)

Contemporary, lyrical, jazz commercial and different styles of street dance. The concept of the performance is Climate Change, to raise awareness and educate the audience about the impacts of their everyday actions.

Medium Mark (24 Marks)

Contemporary and ballet styles, blending fluid, harmonious movement with structured formations that highlight symmetry and interwoven positions. However, ideas are fairly broad and are not always clearly linked to the full requirements of the brief. The candidate refers to universally relatable themes, rather than the theme of Joint Effort.

Low Mark (11 Marks)

A limited response that shows the theme only in isolation of other elements of the brief. The learner aims to show the contrast between conflict and peace, using a mix of contemporary and hip-hop, performing to 'Run This Town' by Jay-Z and Rihanna.

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Component 3 support and resources

Exemplars

BPA03/1A Performing Arts

High Mark (47 marks)

Jukebox musical based on Crystal LaBeija, including ballroom dance elements alongside the acting.

Medium Mark (24 Marks)

Bertolt Brecht, using Non-naturalistic and Epic theatre styles, including breaking of the fourth wall.

Low Mark (11 Marks)

Anti-bullying drama with some musical interludes – demonstrates where a group hasn't been clear about the audience and message and the ideas are basic and generalised, not fully matching the theme.

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Component 3 support and resources

Exemplars

BPA03/1B Production Design

High Mark (47 Marks)

Set design - the learner has carefully considered how the performance environment can support the story and enhance audience engagement. Performance is centred around refugees and the impact of war on their home country and the alienation and hostility they face in their new host country.

Medium Mark (24 Marks)

Sound design - learner has engaged with the performance concept and explored relevant themes, such as revolution, power, and the role of art. There is clear awareness of theatre styles, including epic and physical theatre, and how these techniques support the storytelling and convey key messages to the audience. The theme of the performance is revolution through art.

Low Mark (11 Marks)

Set design - that the learner has engaged with the task and produced some relevant ideas for the performance. There is evidence of creativity and thought, particularly in the consideration of props, furniture, or stage elements that could support the scenes. However, the response is somewhat disjointed and lacks cohesion, as ideas were initially generated as a group and then adapted to fit the brief.

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Subject Advisor Support

Drama, Theatre and Performing Arts
Paul Webster

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Email: teachingperformingarts@pearson.com

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