

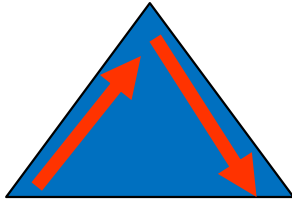


Section A: Dramatic Structure

Some might start with a **prologue**. This is a short introduction to the story which gives the audience some background details.

Act Two: RISING ACTION AND CLIMAX
Develops characters and builds up to a climax.

Act One: EXPOSITION
Introduction of main characters and hints at a conflict they may face.



Some performances may end with an **epilogue**. Epilogues can be used to summarise or comment on the ending.

Act Three: FALLING ACTION AND RESOLUTION
Conflict is resolved and settled, loose ends tied up. Play ends.

Section B: Theatre Conventions

Stage Directions:
Instructions written in a script to explain how a play should be performed.

The way characters say their lines

The characters' movements

The scenery, props and furniture

Some plays have very limited stage directions. This gives the freedom to adapt the play to suit their own ideas.



Narrators:

- Some plays use narrators to give the audience **extra information**.
- Also a common way of breaking the **fourth wall**.
- If someone comments on the action without taking part, they are **omniscient** and are able to tell the audience what the characters are thinking. BLOOD BROTHERS
- Always consider where a narrator is placed on stage

Section B cont... Theatre Conventions

Dialogue:

This is the term given to lines that are spoken between characters.

DUOLOGUE: when 2 characters have a conversation together.

MONOLOGUE: a character makes a speech to another character or the audience.

SOLILOQUY: a character speaks to themselves to express their feelings. Gets the audience emotionally involved, as the character is expressing their inner most thoughts and feelings.

ASIDE: when a character makes a comment to another character or to the audience and the other characters onstage do not hear it. Can be done for comic effect.



Dramatic Irony

Dramatic irony is when the audience knows something the other characters don't.

- The audience might witness an important event that some of the characters aren't on stage to see.
- A character could reveal hidden thoughts and feelings to the audience in an aside or soliloquy.
- Disguises allow the characters to hide their true identity but the audience can see through them.

MARKING THE MOMENT

Some moments are so important they need to be emphasised.

FREEZE FRAME

Action freezes, a character steps out to talk to the audience

SLOW MOTION

The physical action slows down for emphasis

TABLEAU

Frozen picture

Cross-Cutting

When 2 or more scenes that take place in different times or places are performed on stage at the same time.



Section B cont... Theatre Conventions

Flashback and Flashforward: These conventions play around with time.

FLASHBACK:

- Scenes that go **back in time**
- **Create a non-linear plot** without causing the audience too much confusion.

FLASHFORWARD:

- Scenes that go forward in time to show the audience events that will happen in the future.
- Provides audience with clues about what will happen later and creates **dramatic irony**.

Both are used to:

Shock

Surprise

Reveal information the audience didn't know before, or show a new side to a character.



Section C – Characterisation . Page 20-23 CGP

Constantin Stanislavski felt that actors should understand their character's backstory, as it gives them motivation and makes for a more convincing performance. (Naturalism)



How to create a backstory:

1. Decide what **age** your character is
2. Decide where your play is set, as the **social and historical context** of the play will determine how your character behaves.
3. Are there any **significant events** that have happened in your character's past?

Key steps to character creation:

- **Backstory**
- **Social/historical Context** – this affects how the character will behave and react to situations.
- **Role on the wall** – what you think of yourself as the character and what others think of the character.
- **Hot seating** – audience can ask the character questions to get more information from them about their history etc.

Character Creation: Always ask yourself:

- Is my character believable?
- Am I using vocal and physical skills that show the appropriate **age** and **social class** of the character?
- Are my **actions and reactions** appropriate in the **historical context** of the play?





Section C cont... – Characterisation

Rehearsal Techniques for effective characterisation

- Method acting:** when a performer fully immerses themselves in their role and aims to become their character both on and off stage.
- Hot-seating:** an actor in the 'hot seat' is asked questions by the rest of the cast and they must answer in role as their character. This can help the actor to imagine how their character would react in different situations.
- Status games:** it's important for a performer to understand their relationships with other characters. Arranging the cast into a tableau, using levels and space to indicate high and low status characters and their relationships with each other. Can also show how different characters might treat each other.
- Defend a character:** this involves being a character's lawyer and defending them against some of the things they have done – justifying the character's actions.
- Conscience alley:** group splits in to 2 lines. A character walks between the lines and each member (in character or not) gives them advice about a decision they have to make. This helps the group understand this character better.

Section D – Vocal Skills. Pages 28-30 CGP



- Performers need to express themselves.**
- Vocal performance is the way a performer speaks their lines.
 - Voice can tell the audience so much about a character's emotional state, status, background and personality.
 - Vocal performance adds meaning to a character's words (sarcasm, persuasion, insincerity.)
 - The way characters speak to each other tells the audience a lot about their relationship with one another.
 - Vocal performance can also show how a character changes throughout a performance.

Accent	A way of pronouncing a language (country, area or social class)
Volume	How loud or quietly someone speaks
Pitch	How high or low someone speaks
Tone	How something is said – sarcastic tone, happy tone, sad tone
Timing	Use of pause or silence. The rhythm of the way you speak
Pace	How fast or slow someone speaks
Intonation	The rise and fall of the voice
Phrasing	How something is said for dramatic effect (pause, emphasise words)
Emotional range	Happy, sad, scared, shy, nervous (linked with tone)
Delivery of lines	Working with other actors (linked with timing) action - reaction



Section E – Physical Skills. Pages 24-27 CGP



Eye contact Location on stage

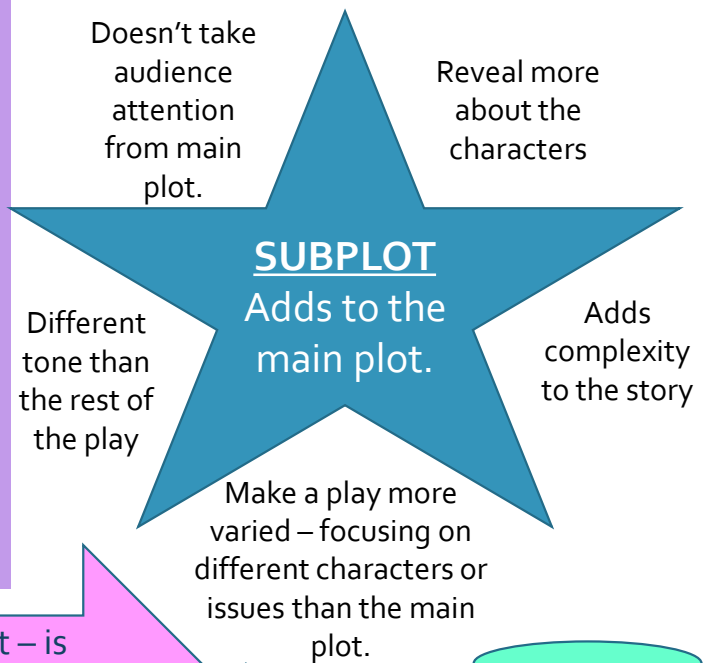
Reacting to others

Body language:
Body language is a type of non-verbal communication. A performer can use movements, facial expression and posture to communicate how a character is feeling.

Movement and stillness can be very effective.

Posture	How someone stands and/or sits (slouched, upright)
Gesture	How someone uses their hands and arms when they are speaking
Facial expression	How the face is used to communicate feeling. (EG – open mouthed, scrunched eyes, pouted lips.)
Movement	How someone moves around the stage space. This also includes physical theatre movement (dance, unison movement.)
Gait	How someone walks (stride, leap, shuffle.)

Section F – plot and subplots. Linear and non-linear



Section F – plot and subplots. Linear and non-linear

PLOT:
The series of events that take place in a play. ALL plots need a beginning, a middle and an end.

CONFLICT:
Is a key element of a plot. It can be:

- A Disagreement
- A Problem that needs solved
- An obstacle that needs to be overcome.

A LINEAR plot – is chronological and easier to follow

A NON-LINEAR plot jumps backwards and forwards to different events and times.

How the conflict is resolved depends on the genre of the play:
Comedy = happy ending
Tragedy = tragic ending (death, pain, suffering)
CLIFFHANGER – audience must guess what will happen

