

# **DRAMA SYLLABUS**

## **Upper Secondary Express Course**

Implementation starting with  
2018 Secondary Three Cohort



Ministry of Education  
SINGAPORE

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# CONTENTS

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	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	
• Drama as a Discipline	3
• Students as Art Makers	3
• Curriculum Concept	3
• Syllabus Aims	4
• Drama, Desired Outcomes of Education & 21st Century Competencies	5
<b>2. CONTENT</b>	
• Areas of Study	10
• Learning Outcomes and Knowledge, Skills & Values	11
<b>3. PEDAGOGY</b>	
• Effective Pedagogies for Learning Drama	16
• Principles of Teaching & Learning Drama	16
• Principles of Progression	17
• Pedagogical Approaches	17
• Teaching & Learning Activities for Drama	18
<b>4. ASSESSMENT</b>	
• Emphasis on Disciplinary Thinking & Practices of Drama	20
• Assessment Objectives for Formative & Summative Assessment	20
• Assessment Modes for School-based Assessment	20
• National Assessment	21
<b>5. STUDENT WELL-BEING FOR TEACHING &amp; LEARNING OF DRAMA</b>	
• Physical Well-being	22
• Emotional Well-being	23
<b>6. REFERENCES</b>	24
<b>7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	26

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## Drama as a Discipline

Drama is one of the oldest performing art forms known. Cultures and societies throughout time have developed their way of understanding the world and expressed their observations and feelings through drama. Therefore, drama is an exploration and expression of the human condition as people convey personal, social and cultural meanings through it. It is also a social art form that engages the physical, social, cognitive, affective and aesthetic domains in the meaning-making process as participants collectively engage in stories about human beings: our past, our present and our potential future.

## Students as Art Makers

The value of drama education is in developing students' deep understanding that meaning is socially constructed through their acquisition of disciplinary thinking and practices. Students draw on their personal experiences, observations, interpretation and analysis of stories around them to conceptualise, rehearse and reflect on their use of body, voice and other resources, and present devised or scripted dramatic material for an intended audience.

In acquiring the disciplinary thinking and practices of drama, students also engage with fictional human experiences using their imagination. Through these learning experiences, students will gain greater insights of themselves and of others in relation to their personal, social and cultural worlds. Drama also enhances students' ability to observe, appreciate, empathise, analyse, synthesise, emphasise and generate dramatic material from the intricate relationships between people, between people and ideas, and between people and their environments. Hence, the curriculum concept for drama stems from the exploration and expression of the human condition.

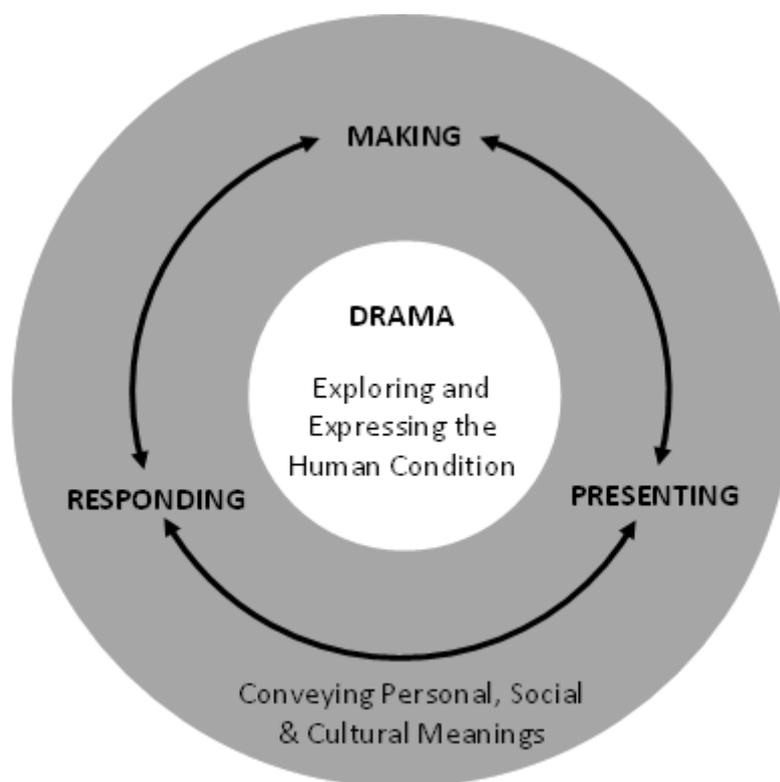
## Curriculum Concept

**Figure 1** overleaf provides an overview of the curriculum concept. The concentric circles stem from the core of the discipline in the inner circle, which focuses on exploring and expressing the human condition. The outer circle of Making, Presenting and Responding represent the inter-related domains that collectively guide the designing, facilitating and scaffolding of practice-based learning experiences<sup>1</sup>. This will enable students to develop and draw on their disciplinary thinking and practices of drama to convey personal, social and cultural meanings.

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<sup>1</sup>Practice-based learning experiences refer to learner-centred, age- and ability-appropriate experiential and embodied learning opportunities. This approach is based on (i) Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, which shows how experience is translated through observations and reflection into concepts, which in turn are used as guides for experimentation and application to new situations; and (ii) Kemp's (2012) work that drew on neuroscience to apply to the practices of drama/theatre practitioners to show that physical experiences of taking on, creating and presenting a role shapes conceptual thinking of how dramatic performances work.

**Figure 1: Curriculum Concept for Drama**



### **Syllabus Aims**

This syllabus aims to nurture students' outlook and dispositions as part of holistic education and develop an informed appreciation of drama. The knowledge, skills and understanding will also provide students with the foundation to continue with their post-secondary study of Drama if they choose to.

The aims of the Drama syllabus are to:

- a. develop students' understanding of the human condition to convey personal, social and cultural meanings through drama;
- b. develop students' appreciation of the value of, and enjoyment of drama;
- c. enable personal engagement with drama presentations, drawing connections between the self and society;
- d. enable collaboration with one another, valuing individual and group contributions towards shared goals that are part of the drama practice;
- e. facilitate the creation and communication of ideas, thoughts and feelings through dramatic presentations that are meaningful to themselves and the intended audience; and
- f. facilitate the investigation, analysis and evaluation of their own drama work and that of others in order to develop their critical and inventive thinking.

Syllabus aims (a) and (b) endeavour to nurture students' intrinsic understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the art form that will complement their holistic education.

Syllabus aims (c) and (d) focus on developing students' intra-personal understanding and inter-personal skills to communicate and collaborate well with one another towards a collective venture. A better understanding of the self and learning of collaborative skills are an important and inherent part of the disciplinary thinking and practices of Drama.

Syllabus aims (e) and (f) focus on the set of knowledge, skills and understanding that students will acquire by the end of the course.

### **Drama, Desired Outcomes of Education & 21st Century Competencies**

The Desired Outcomes of Education (DOE) are attributes that educators aspire for every student in our schools to possess upon the completion of his/her formal education. A purposeful study of Drama provides opportunities for these overarching educational outcomes to be achieved. The syllabus aims presented in the earlier section express the aspiration for Drama to enable students to have the following attributes upon completion of their formal education. He/She should be a/an:

- **confident person** who has a strong sense of right and wrong, is adaptable and resilient, knows himself/herself, is discerning in judgement, thinks independently and critically, and communicates effectively;
- **self-directed learner** who questions, reflects, perseveres and takes responsibility for his/her own learning;
- **active contributor** who is able to work effectively in teams, is innovative, exercises initiative, takes calculated risks and strives for excellence; and
- **concerned citizen** who is rooted to Singapore, has a strong sense of civic responsibility, is informed about Singapore and the world, and takes an active part in bettering the lives of others around him/her.

In today's world, personal, social and cultural issues are complex and interconnected. Students need to acquire transferable knowledge and skills for future work and living, and more fundamentally, for effective citizenry. The learning of Drama inherently contributes to the development of 21st Century Competencies (21CC) such as Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-cultural Skills; Critical and Inventive Thinking; and Communication, Collaboration and Information Skills. For instance, learning about drama could involve students considering a social group's stories and concerns through interviewing members of their immediate community. It is an opportunity for students to appreciate different cultures and religions as they gather multiple perspectives to better understand the complexity of personal, social and cultural issues. In the development of their drama work, students will exercise their critical and inventive thinking as they work in groups to develop and confidently present a performance that can entertain, educate and encourage the audience to dialogue on relevant issues. Such a process will help our students develop into confident persons, concerned citizens, self-directed learners and active contributors when they work independently or in groups.

## Drama & 21st Century Competencies

The value in the study of Drama is the students' deep understanding that meaning is socially constructed. With this understanding, they will be more able to effectively communicate to an intended audience. Students acquire such an understanding through enquiry-based<sup>2</sup> and reflective learning, which are guided by the learning domains of Making, Presenting and Responding.

As part of the holistic development of the child, the learning of Drama presents opportunities to develop the emerging 21st Century Competencies (21CC) of Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-cultural Skills (CGC); Critical and Inventive Thinking (CIT); and Communication, Collaboration and Information Skills (CCI).

For illustration, the following learning opportunities in **Table 1** are based on the group performance task of devising and performing a 12-minute documentary drama based on the life of a historical figure or event in Singapore.

**Table 1: Learning Opportunities in Drama Based on Standards and Benchmarks for the Emerging 21CC**

<b>Standards</b>	<b>Benchmarks by End of S4/S5</b>	<b>Learning Opportunities in Drama</b>
<b>Civic Literacy, Global Awareness and Cross-cultural Skills (CGC)</b>		
<b>CGC 1</b> Aware of community and national issues and plays a part to improve the community and nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The student is able to discuss issues that affect the culture, socio-economic development, governance, future and identity of Singapore, and use evidence to support his/her viewpoints.</li><li>• The student is able, with support, to plan and organise school and community activities/programmes to address social issues.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore, discuss and synthesise the personal, social, cultural, historical and geographical contexts and issues surrounding the life of a historical figure or event in Singapore or beyond to inform the drama work.</li><li>• Investigate the community's existing concerns in our society with a focus on drawing their attention to and inviting dialogue on relevant social issues brought up by the drama work.</li></ul>
<b>CGC 2</b> Aware of global issues and trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The student is able to demonstrate awareness of how global issues impact relations between various countries.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore the implications for Singapore and its relationships with other countries as a result of decisions made by the historical figure, or as a result of significant moments of the historical event.</li></ul>
<b>CGC 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The student is able to demonstrate appropriate</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work in pairs or groups to collect data about the target audience to</li></ul>

<sup>2</sup>The enquiry approach to learning Drama is similar to qualitative research methodology (Norris, 2010; Henry, 2010; and Fitzpatrick & Rubie-Davies, 2013) and scientific enquiry (Warner, 2013).

Standards	Benchmarks by End of S4/S5	Learning Opportunities in Drama
Displays socio-cultural and religious sensitivity and awareness	<p>skills and behaviour to work together with people from a diverse range of socio-cultural and religious backgrounds within and beyond Singapore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student is able to contribute to promoting Singapore's social cohesion.</li> </ul>	<p>understand their perceptions, concerns and views on social issues to inform the themes of the drama work to meaningfully engage the audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciate different cultures and human behaviour through examining the variety of human relationships, real and/or imagined, in different social, cultural, historical and geographical contexts as part of the exploration of the stimulus and/or texts.</li> </ul>
<b>Critical and Inventive Thinking (CIT)</b>		
<p><b>CIT 1</b></p> <p>Explores possibilities and generates ideas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student is able to generate ideas and explore different pathways that lead to solutions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work individually and collaboratively to explore a range of situations, roles and relationships from stimulus and/or text; foresee audience's interest and reactions, and make adjustments to the drama work to achieve intended purposes (e.g., one of the purposes can be educating the audience about the historical figure or events).</li> </ul>
<p><b>CIT 2</b></p> <p>Exercises sound reasoning, decision-making and metacognition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student is able to use evidence and adopt different viewpoints to explain his/her reasoning and decisions, having considered the implications of the relationship among different viewpoints.</li> <li>The student is able to suspend judgement, reassess conclusions and consider alternatives to refine his/her thoughts, attitudes, behaviour and actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect upon and assess individual's and others' drama work based on interpretation and analysis of the intent of and effectiveness of the drama work. Present a personal point of view that is grounded in values and based on sound and balanced interpretation of the available information.</li> <li>Examine multiple perspectives and interpretation of the stimuli, text and performances. Reassess personal attitudes towards the themes and issues inherent in the drama work, and engage with alternative views by peers and the audience.</li> </ul>

Standards	Benchmarks by End of S4/S5	Learning Opportunities in Drama
<p><b>CIT 3</b></p> <p>Manages complexities and ambiguities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student is able to identify essential elements of complex tasks, stay focused on them, take on diverse roles and persevere when he/she encounters difficulties and unexpected challenges.</li> <li>• The student is able to manage uncertainty and adapt to diverse demands and challenges in new and unfamiliar contexts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analytically unpack the elements, conventions and style of performances, analyse each component and draw out their inter-connectedness in order to pinpoint how to improve the work processes and/or the drama performance.</li> <li>• Incorporate feedback and responses from teachers, peers and formal audience of their drama work and respond to the challenges and questions in refining their drama work.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication, Collaboration and Information Skills (CCI)</b>		
<p><b>CCI 1</b></p> <p>Communicates and collaborates effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student is able to convey complex information and ideas coherently and clearly to create impact for specific purposes and contexts.</li> <li>• The student is able to interact with others to construct knowledge and new understandings and ideas.</li> <li>• The student is able to reflect on and modify his/her working relationships and role in contributing to the group's goals, as determined collectively by its members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present a summary of findings about the historical event/person in a performance, using suitable combinations of Fundamentals of Drama and expressive skills that would interest the intended audience of the work.</li> <li>• Work in pairs or groups to present their findings and ideas through dramatic presentations based on knowledge informed by an investigation and understanding of issues.</li> <li>• Reflect upon the work processes during the research/brainstorming, rehearsal and presentation phases of the performance task with a focus on how the team has incorporated everyone's views and inputs, resolved differences and achieved consensus for the group task.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CCI 2</b></p> <p>Manages, creates and shares digital information thoughtfully,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student is able to refine search results, organise information systematically and manage information sensitively, while abiding by copyright regulations and minimising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine and make selective use of information obtained from different sources, both primary and secondary, to inform the drama work during the ideation, forming and consolidation phase of the performance task.</li> </ul>

Standards	Benchmarks by End of S4/S5	Learning Opportunities in Drama
ethically and responsibly	<p>security risks in the handling of information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student is able to verify the accuracy, credibility and currency of information across multiple sources.</li> <li>• The student is able to contribute actively and value-add to the information pool in an online community while observing proper etiquette.</li> <li>• The student is able to project a positive online presence and manage his/her online reputation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine the sources of data obtained during the research on issues or themes by comparing with other sources (i.e., interviews, history textbooks, archives, etc.).</li> <li>• Locate, distil and ethically share information found online about the historical person and relevant events using the suitable online media platforms to document the work to be shared with the class and community.</li> <li>• Create and upkeep a truthful online profile that identifies the student as the researcher, and proper referencing are kept to honour intellectual property rights of playwrights and the primary and secondary sources of information.</li> </ul>

## 2. CONTENT

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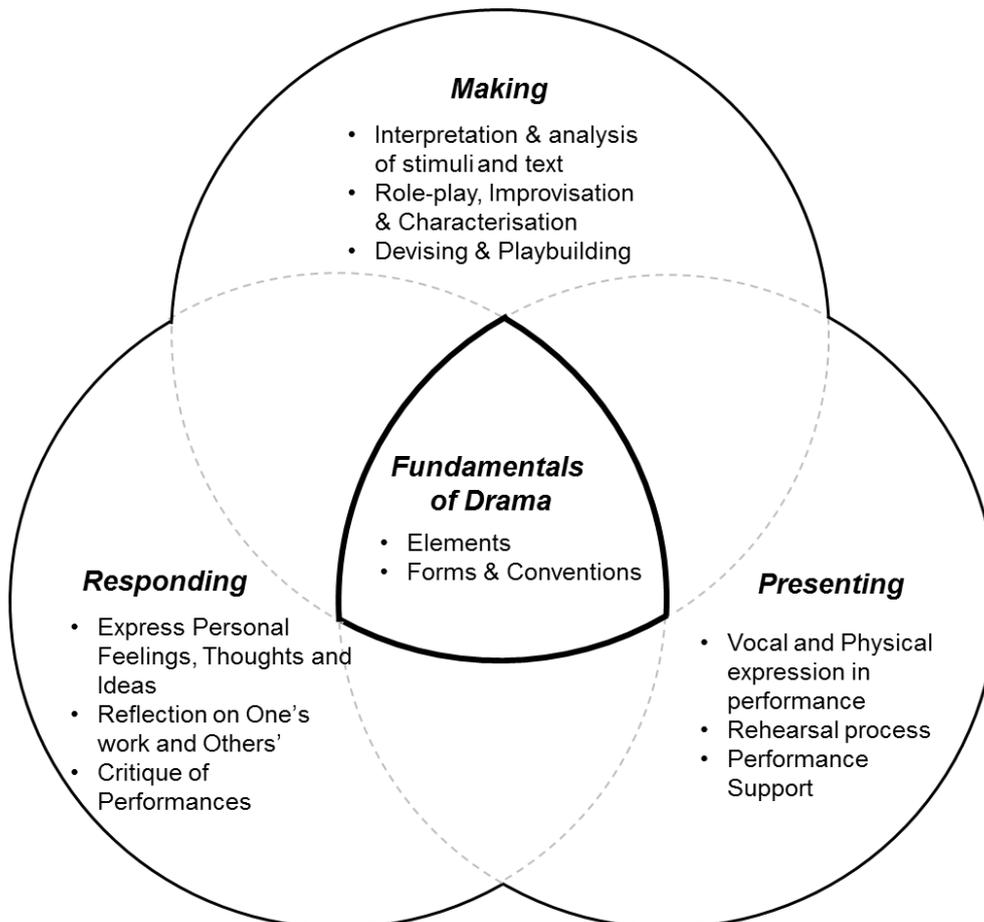
The content for the Drama syllabus prescribes essential coverage while allowing teachers to exercise their professional judgement to customise the learning experiences for the students. Teachers need to keep in mind that the focus of the syllabus is on transferring working knowledge of the content (i.e., knowing what, knowing how to, and knowing when to apply) to empower the students as art makers.

### Areas of Study

The Drama syllabus provides the foundation for disciplinary thinking and practices of the art form. The stories or the personal, social and cultural worlds that the students explore and express will form the context for their application.

In the teaching and learning of Drama, the four Areas of Study (AoS), i.e., Fundamentals of Drama, Making, Presenting and Responding, are to be taught in an integrated manner. At the core is the Fundamentals of Drama on which Making, Presenting and Responding are built upon. They are interrelated in nature and are illustrated in **Figure 2**.

**Figure 2: AoS for O-Level Drama**



**Table 2** summarises the requisite content of the syllabus.

**Table 2: Summary of Baseline Content for the O-Level Drama Syllabus**

Fundamentals of Drama		
<b>Elements of Drama:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The human context (Situations/Roles/Relationships)</li> <li>• Dramatic tensions (Task/Relationship/Suspense/Surprise)</li> <li>• Focus</li> <li>• Place/Time/Language/Movement/Mood/Symbols</li> <li>• Dramatic meaning</li> </ul>		
<b>Main Form: Realism/Naturalism</b> <u>Learning Focus 1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing and performing believable situations, roles and relationships for realistic presentation of human and human interaction.</li> </ul> <u>Learning Focus 2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varying the realistic portrayal of human and human interaction for dramatic effect.</li> </ul>		
<b>Conventions:</b> Circle of Life, Cross-cutting, Flashback/Flash-forward, Marking the Moment, Narration, Tableau		
Making	Presenting	Responding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretation and Analysis of Stimuli and Text</li> <li>• Role-play, Improvisation and Characterisation</li> <li>• Devising and Playbuilding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocal and Physical Expression in Performance</li> <li>• Rehearsal Process</li> <li>• Performance Support<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express Personal Feelings, Thoughts and Ideas</li> <li>• Reflection on One’s Work and Others’</li> <li>• Critique of Performances</li> </ul>

### **Learning Outcomes and Knowledge, Skills & Values**

The learning experiences are designed with the Areas of Study (AoS) in mind. Through effective teaching and learning of the inter-related AoS, students will be expected to attain the eight Learning Outcomes (LOs) by the end of the course of study. Mapped from the revised Bloom’s Taxonomy<sup>4</sup>, the specific Knowledge, Skills and Values (KSVs) are to be taught so that students will be able to achieve the LOs.

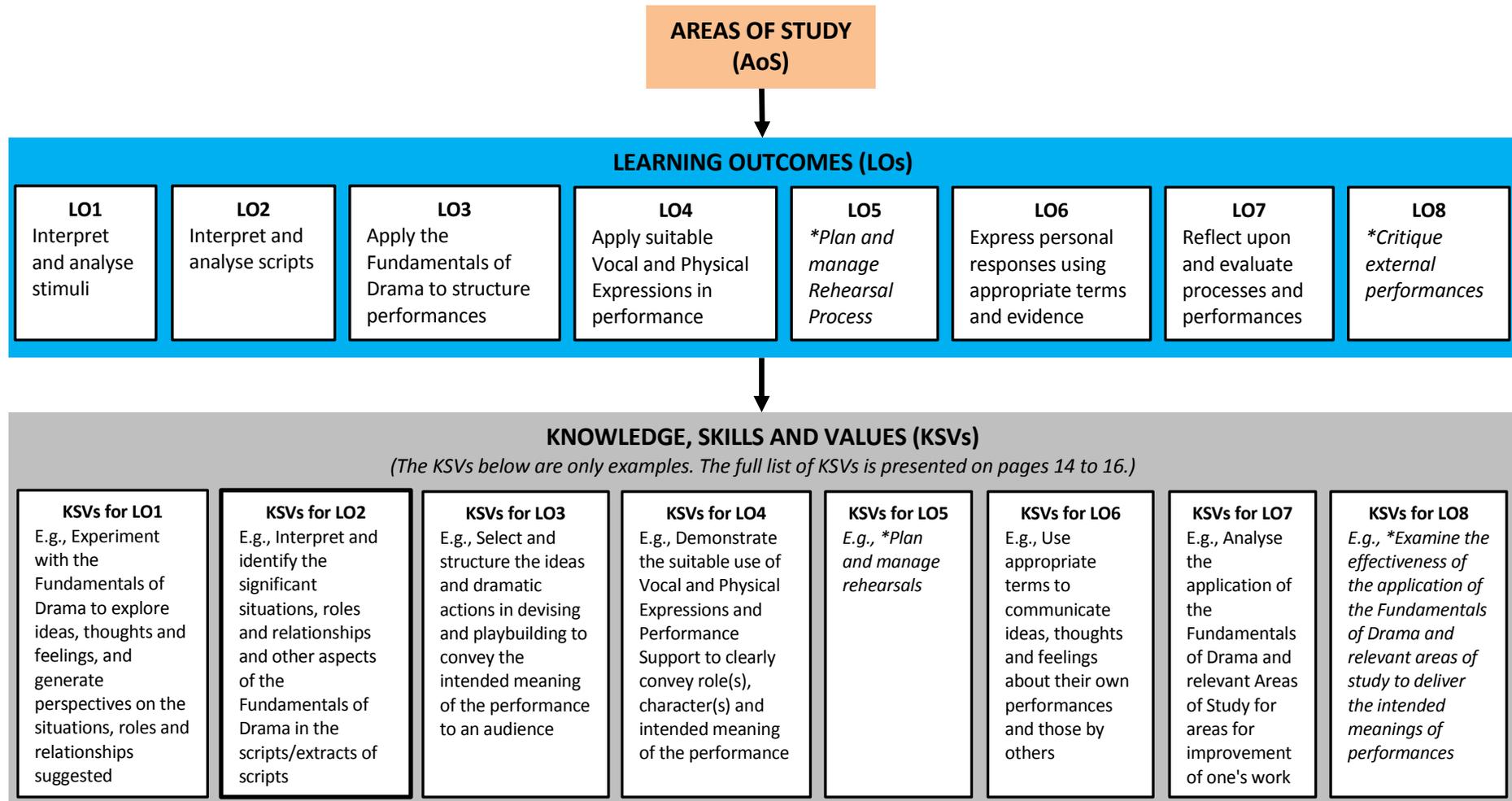
An overview of the connections between AoS, LOs and KSVs is shown in **Figure 3**.

To further illustrate how the AoS, LOs and KSVs are inter-related and to guide teachers to plan instructional programmes, the connections between them are presented in **Chart 1** from pages 16 to 18 where the requisite KSVs are further explained.

<sup>3</sup> Performance support refers to the use of simple props, sets and costumes to enhance students’ performances.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, L.W. (Ed.), Krathwohl, D.R. (Ed.), Airasian, P.W., Cruikshank, K.A., Mayer, R.E., Pintrich, P.R., Raths, J., & Wittrock, M.C. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (Complete edition). New York: Longman.

**Figure 3: Overview of Connections Between AoS, LOs & KSVs**



\*LOs and KSVs that are italicised will be assessed formatively as they are important for students to learn as part of their acquisition of disciplinary thinking and practice of Drama.

### Chart 1: Connections Between AoS, LOs & KSVs

**Notes:**

1. The chart from pages 14 to 16 supports teachers in planning the scope, combination and sequence of KSVs to be taught in order for students to attain the eight LOs by the end of their course of study. The chart also helps teachers decide on the areas for assessment in school.
2. In practice, the AoS, LOs and KSVs are to be taught in an integrated manner over time. They are outlined in the chart for clarity and are not organised in any hierarchical or sequential manner.
3. In planning the learning experiences, teachers will be guided by the Principles of Teaching & Learning Drama (pages 17 to 19).

*\*LOs and KSVs that are italicised will be assessed formatively as they are important for students to learn as part of their acquisition of disciplinary thinking and practice of Drama.*

LO	LEARNING OUTCOMES	AoS (M)	AoS (P)	AoS (R)
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS and VALUES</li> </ul>			
LO1	<i>Interpret and analyse stimuli<sup>5</sup></i>			
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify the possible situations, roles and relationships suggested by stimuli.</li> </ul>	√		√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Experiment with the Fundamentals of Drama to explore ideas, thoughts and feelings, and to generate perspectives on the situations, roles and relationships suggested by the stimuli for performance possibilities.</li> </ul>	√	√	√
LO2	<i>Interpret and analyse scripts</i>			
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interpret and identify the significant situations, roles and relationships and other aspects of the Fundamentals of Drama in the extracts of scripts.</li> </ul>	√		√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explain the relationship between the significant aspects of the fundamentals present in the extracts of scripts and how they collectively convey meaning.</li> </ul>	√		√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Articulate a coherent and consistent interpretation of the performance possibility from the extracts of scripts.</li> </ul>	√		√
LO3	<i>Apply the Fundamentals of Drama to structure performances</i>			

<sup>5</sup> Stimuli such as newspapers, pictures, poems, themes, topics or excerpts of plays can be triggers for students to explore for ideas to structure into performances. Teachers may provide them initially to scaffold students' learning, but students should be driven by their own interest to explore their thoughts, feelings and ideas. Eventually, students should choose their own stimuli for their own work.

LO	LEARNING OUTCOMES	AoS (M)	AoS (P)	AoS (R)
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS and VALUES</li> </ul>			
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply the Fundamentals of Drama during role-playing, improvising, devising and playbuilding to generate and develop ideas suggested by stimuli and script (e.g., establish individual roles and explore relationships between them through planned, improvised and rehearsed dramatic actions<sup>6</sup>).</li> </ul>	√	√	√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the relationship between the significant aspects of the Fundamentals of Drama present in the dramatic actions.</li> </ul>			√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manipulate the Fundamentals of Drama to develop ideas and shape the dramatic actions.</li> </ul>	√	√	√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select and structure the ideas and dramatic actions (e.g., during devising and playbuilding) into a coherent performance to convey intended meanings to an audience.</li> </ul>	√	√	√
LO4	<b>Apply suitable Vocal and Physical Expressions and Performance Support in performance</b>			
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Recognise opportunities to apply suitable elements of Vocal Expression (i.e., tone, emphasis, pace, pause and pitch) and Physical Expression (i.e., gestures, movement and facial expressions) through internalisation of characters.</i></li> </ul>	√	√	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Explore and experiment with elements of Vocal and Physical Expressions to realise characters.</i></li> </ul>	√	√	√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Demonstrate commitment to the role(s) and character(s) during role-play, improvisation and performance.</i></li> </ul>	√	√	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Recognise opportunities where Performance Support (e.g., simple sets, props and costumes) may be used to complement overall meaning of the performance.</i></li> </ul>	√		√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Demonstrate the suitable use of Vocal and Physical Expressions and Performance Support to clearly convey role(s), character(s) and intended meaning of the performance.</i></li> </ul>	√	√	
LO5	<b>Plan and manage Rehearsal Process</b>			
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Use different types of rehearsals (e.g., run-throughs, cue-to-cue, technical, dress and preview) to refine ideas and performances.</i></li> </ul>	√	√	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Plan and manage rehearsals.</i></li> </ul>	√		
LO6	<b>Express personal responses using appropriate terms and evidence</b>			

<sup>6</sup> Dramatic actions refer to moments of interactions between characters and the 'live texts' that collectively contribute to the development of the plot for the performance. This can be done during role-playing, improvising, devising, playbuilding and interpretation of scripts.

LO	LEARNING OUTCOMES	AoS (M)	AoS (P)	AoS (R)
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS and VALUES</li> </ul>			
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use appropriate terms to communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings about their own performances and those by others.</li> </ul>			√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ideas, thoughts and feelings about performances with evidence.</li> </ul>			√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulate a consistent and coherent viewpoint supported with suitable evidence.</li> </ul>			√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express responses in a variety of ways (e.g., verbally, through annotating play texts, journals, documentation of work processes, presentations, etc.)</li> </ul>			√
<b>LO7</b>	<b>Reflect upon and evaluate processes and performances</b>			
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine the individual and group processes leading up to performances.</li> </ul>			√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the application of the Fundamentals of Drama and relevant Areas of Study for areas for improvement of one's work.</li> </ul>	√		√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Value individual and group contributions and responses.</i></li> </ul>			√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Reassess and refine ideas, thoughts, feelings and choices after considering others' views and responses.</i></li> </ul>			√
<b>LO8</b>	<b><i>Critique external performances</i></b>			
KSVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Appreciate a variety of drama performances that:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>are set and written in different contexts (e.g., social, cultural, historical and geographical);</i></li> <li><i>are of different performance forms; and</i></li> <li><i>explore varied issues related to the human condition.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>			√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Determine the intended meanings and purposes of the performances.</i></li> </ul>	√		√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Examine the effectiveness of the performances in the application of the Fundamentals of Drama and relevant Areas of Study to deliver the intended meanings.</i></li> </ul>	√		√
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Appreciate multiple approaches to deliver the intended meanings of performances.</i></li> </ul>			√

### 3. PEDAGOGY

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#### Effective Pedagogies for Learning Drama

Effective pedagogies for learning Drama are experiential<sup>7</sup> and embodied<sup>8</sup> learning, and enquiry-based and reflective learning<sup>9</sup>. The pedagogies are complementary, applied across and embedded within the Areas of Study (AoS). Teachers can draw on them in combination at different points of students' learning experiences in order to facilitate their acquisition of the disciplinary thinking and practices of Drama.

#### Principles of Teaching & Learning Drama

The following principles serve to guide teachers in the design of learning experiences, drawing on the pedagogies, pedagogical approaches and range of teaching and learning activities for the effective learning of Drama.

##### Principle of Contextualisation<sup>10</sup>

Learning experiences, activities and tasks need to be designed around authentic and meaningful contexts of the performance tasks<sup>11</sup>. The stories of the drama chosen for the students also need to consider their personal experiences. Stories that are relatable and relevant to the students' experiences are more suitable to engage them in the learning.

##### Principle of Learner- and Process-focus

Learning tasks and activities need to be designed around students' needs and abilities (i.e., the real context). This involves the explicit teaching, facilitation and modelling of drama learning processes through which students develop disciplinary thinking and practices in Drama.

The drama learning process requires students' active involvement in teacher-designed learning experiences and, more critically, the reflection of their experiences is crucial in developing their disciplinary thinking and understanding of concepts behind "application, generalisation and symbolism" of drama (Schonmann, 2007, p. 597).

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<sup>7</sup> Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle shows how experience is translated through observations and reflection into concepts, which in turn are used as guides for experimentation and application to new situations.

<sup>8</sup> Kemp (2012) drew on neuroscience to apply to the practices of renowned drama/theatre practitioners to show that physical experiences of taking on, creating and presenting a role shapes conceptual thinking of how dramatic performances work.

<sup>9</sup> The enquiry approach to learning Drama has been argued to be similar to qualitative research methodology (Norris, 2010; Henry, 2010; and Fitzpatrick & Rubie-Davies, 2013) and scientific enquiry (Warner, 2013). This learning approach engages students' higher order thinking skills if students' experiences and learning are well-facilitated by teachers' questioning techniques (Johnson, 2002) to guide their reflection.

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from O'Toole (1992) *The Process of Drama: Negotiating Art and Meaning*.

<sup>11</sup> Performance tasks require students to apply their disciplinary thinking and practices of Drama to authentic situations in which students have to integrate their learning. Examples of performance tasks are role-play, improvisations, playbuilding, short presentations of devised material and excerpts of scripts.

## Principle of Integrated Learning

In the teaching and learning of Drama, the Areas of Study (AoS) are to be taught in an integrated manner, building upon and around the Fundamentals of Drama at the core. Students need to individually and collectively experience, explore and experiment with the AoS over time and be supported in their acquisition of the knowledge, skills and values (KSVs) in order to attain the learning outcomes (LOs). The integrated learning can be structured to occur within a lesson and over the course of study.

## **Principles of Progression**

Increasing student ownership, self-directedness and depth in disciplinary thinking and practices of Drama are structured through intentional design of learning experiences. The guiding principles<sup>12</sup> are:

### Role Progression

Students should be guided to progress from simple role-taking to more complex dramatic characterisation through teacher-structured learning experiences, performance tasks and techniques such as side-coaching<sup>13</sup>.

### Pedagogic Progression

Students should be guided to progress from teacher-driven Drama work to student-driven Drama work guided by the teachers, and from classroom presentations to an informal audience of peers to presentations to a formal audience (for instance, members of the school community or even the public).

### Aesthetic Progression

Students should be introduced to different Forms of Drama in the course of their study to enrich their understanding of different traditions and styles and also inform their aesthetic choices. Beginning with Forms that the students are more familiar with, new Forms introduced should be sequenced meaningfully to broaden and deepen students' disciplinary thinking and practices.

## **Pedagogical Approaches**

Drawing on the Principles of Teaching & Learning Drama and the Principles of Progression, two pedagogical approaches are recommended.

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<sup>12</sup> Adapted from Neelands, J. (2000). *Beginning drama 11 - 14*. London: David Fulton Publishers.

<sup>13</sup> Side coaching is an instructional technique by the teacher to help students. The teacher, as a bystander to the dramatic action, can quietly offer suggestions to students during role-play and improvisation to help them develop more complex characterisation.

## Learning Through Forms

Teachers should incorporate at least two other Forms as part of their instructional programme. This pedagogical approach is to provide contexts and purposes for students to deepen their learning of the Fundamentals of Drama and extend their skills in other Areas of Study. The exposure to other Forms of drama will also enrich students' learning.

The list of recommended Forms consists of a mix of Western, Asian and Regional, inherited historical/cultural and contemporary Forms. They are:

- a. *Bangsawan*
- b. Biography/Character Study
- c. Chinese Opera
- d. Collage Drama
- e. *Commedia Dell'Arte*
- f. Documentary Drama
- g. Forum Theatre
- h. Greek Theatre
- i. *Kabuki*
- j. *Kathakali*
- k. Mime
- l. Musical Theatre
- m. Pantomime
- n. Physical Theatre
- o. *Wayang Kulit*

## Learning Through Extracts of Quality Scripts

To illustrate contexts, purposes and the application of the Areas of Study, teachers will need to expose students to extracts<sup>14</sup> of quality scripts with themes that will appeal to the students. For a balanced perspective, teachers ought to select at least one local and non-local extract as part of their instructional programme.

## **Teaching and Learning Activities for Drama**

Guided by the Principles of Teaching and Learning Drama, teachers can draw from a range of teaching and learning activities to design learning experiences for the students. Some of them are:

- Teacher-led practical workshops;
- Analysis of stimuli and scripts;
- Role-play (individual, pair and group);
- Improvisation;
- Devising and Playbuilding;
- Rehearsals;

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<sup>14</sup> More examples of local and non-local extracts of plays will be provided in the Teaching and Learning Guide. A lesson exemplar of how these extracts can be used as part of the instructional programme will also be provided.

- Research;
- Journalling and sketching;
- Annotation of scripts;
- Review of informal class presentations; and
- Review of external performances.

## 4. ASSESSMENT

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### Emphasis on Disciplinary Thinking & Practices of Drama

In alignment with the syllabus, the focus of assessment places greater emphasis on students' thinking process and application of the disciplinary knowledge and skills of Drama in both written and practical work than the quality of their final performances.

The assessment objectives will serve to guide the planning of assessment practices in the school's instructional programme, which includes both assessment *for* the purpose of improving students' learning (i.e. feedback on students' progress) and assessment *of* learning (i.e. students' performance at a point in time). They are based on the syllabus aims, Areas of Study, the learning domains, Principles of Teaching and Learning and Progression in Drama.

### Assessment Objectives (AOs) for Formative & Summative Assessment

Students will be assessed on their:

- ability to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of drama to explore, generate and structure ideas in the realisation of drama (AO1);
- acting skills and their ability to communicate intent clearly and effectively to a live audience (AO2); and
- ability to analyse and evaluate their own work and work processes using appropriate terminology (AO3).

### Assessment Modes for School-based Assessment

Assessment modes for school-based assessment are presented in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: Assessment Modes**

S/N	Mode	Assessment Objectives (AO)
1	<u>Students' responses</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Teachers' questioning of students' work and processes</li><li>Students' feedback on peer's work</li><li>Students' responses to external performances</li><li>Oral quiz</li></ul>	AO1 AO3 AO3 AO3
2	<u>Teachers' critical analysis and observation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Work processes (group and individual)</li><li>Performance quality (group and individual)</li></ul>	AO1 & AO3 AO2
3	<u>Written work</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reflective journals</li><li>Documentation of research and work processes</li><li>Portfolio</li></ul>	AO1 & AO3 AO1 & AO3 AO1 & AO3

4	<u>Performance tasks<sup>15</sup></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and present a short performance based on a stimulus for an intended audience (group or individual)</li> <li>• Interpret and present a short performance based on an extract of a script for an intended audience (group or individual)</li> </ul>	AO1, AO2 & AO3  AO1, AO2 & AO3
5	<u>Timed written work</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical reflection on devised work</li> <li>• Critical reflection on working with an excerpt of a play</li> <li>• Analysis of unseen stimuli and play text</li> </ul>	AO1 & AO3 AO1 & AO3 AO1

## National Assessment

At the end of the two-year course, students will sit for the O-Level Drama Examination. In alignment with the syllabus, the National Assessment uses the same assessment objectives.

### AO1: Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to explore, generate and structure ideas in the realisation of drama.

### AO2: Communication in Performance

Candidates will be assessed on their acting skills and their ability to communicate clearly and effectively to a live audience.

### AO3: Analysis and Evaluation

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to analyse and evaluate their own dramatic work and work processes using appropriate terminology.

The scheme of assessment is presented in **Table 4**.

**Table 4: Scheme of National Assessment<sup>16</sup>**

Assessment Objectives	Paper 1 Written Examination	Paper 2 Coursework	Weighting for qualification
AO1: Knowledge and Understanding	30%	15%	45%
AO2: Communication in Performance	–	30%	30%
AO3: Analysis and Evaluation	10%	15%	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>15</sup> Extended performance tasks such as creating and presenting a short performance for an audience provide authentic contexts for students to apply their disciplinary thinking and practices to real-life situations.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on the National Assessment, refer to the Examination Syllabus available at [www.seab.gov.sg](http://www.seab.gov.sg)

## 5. STUDENT WELL-BEING

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As part of the study of Drama, students need to be actively involved in developing their physical vocabulary to hone their expressive skills and learn to work with a performance space during rehearsals and the actual performance. In addition, students need to draw on and express their ideas, thoughts and feelings as part of the learning process.

Consequently, it is important that teachers refer to the guidelines provided to build routines, model, monitor students and explicitly teach some of these practices for students' physical and emotional well-being during their course of study.

### Physical Well-being

Before classes, rehearsals or performances, teachers and students need to carry out a check of the space to ensure physical safety. Checks should include, but are not limited to, items such as:

- a. floor surfaces;
- b. space (e.g., sufficient lighting and adequate ventilation);
- c. portable appliances;
- d. equipment; and
- e. lighting, props and storage of items.

Teachers should also develop safety routines with the students that are part of the disciplinary learning of Drama. For example:

- a. Students should participate in relevant physical and vocal warm-ups and cool-downs, where necessary;
- b. Students should know how to handle, move and use the sets and props safely during rehearsals and performance;
- c. Students should not move into the performance area during rigging of lights; and
- d. Students should wear suitable footwear and clothing, where necessary.

Teachers should also ensure that learning activities that require physical movement are suited to students' physical readiness.

For lessons where some physical contact is necessary as part of group learning for Drama (e.g. trust building exercises, freeze frame, etc.), teachers will also ensure that:

- a. students have been informed of the purpose and nature of the proposed activity before the start of the session; and
- b. students will be given a choice to opt out.

## **Emotional Well-being**

As part of the syllabus, the teacher will discuss ideas and themes with the students. Teachers need to establish a positive and emotionally safe learning environment for the students. This may be achieved by:

- a. understanding the social dynamics of the group, their emotional readiness and maturity to engage with the issues and/or themes;
- b. establishing routines to build rapport with the students that contributes to an environment of mutual trust and respect;
- c. drawing out the best out of every student, seeking to draw on their strengths to contribute to the group's shared goals;
- d. choosing suitable content that is educational and aligned with the school's values; and
- e. support students through the use of fictional contexts and roles during role-play and to help them step out of the role-play thereafter.

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