



COURSE NOTES

Creating a piece for the State Drama Festival (primary)

eModule 2 – Character and stagecraft

Presented by Ben van Biljon and Tamara O'Rourke



The Arts Unit Digital Engagement

Access to online quality arts education support wherever and whenever you need it.
Teacher identified professional development (PD) courses on the Learning Hub,
NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) registered PD courses on MyPL.

Biographies

Ben van Biljon

Ben has been a primary school teacher for 12 years, with 11 of those teaching at Mosman Public School in the North Shore area of Sydney. He has always had a particular passion for the dramatic arts. Ben has written, directed and produced a number of stage and whole school musicals that have involved over 300 students. He has also directed a Year 5 drama group for the last 7 years which has performed each year at the Arts Alive Drama Festival.

For many years Ben has assisted as a crew member with the festival's stage management team. His greatest achievement has been that Mosman Public School's Year 5 Drama Group has successfully been accepted into the NSW State Drama Festival for the last consecutive 4 years.

Tamara O'Rourke

Tamara O'Rourke is currently working as a primary school teacher for the Department of Education and Communities. Tamara graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Education and currently works at Laguna Street Public School as a Stage 3 classroom teacher.

Tamara has a wealth of experience within the realm of the performing arts, especially in the dramatic arts. She has studied at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) and The Actors Centre Australia where she honed her craft and her ability to direct and facilitate drama in and outside the classroom. Tamara began her involvement with the State Drama Festival in 2015, and since then has entered the festival each year with each year resulting in a performance in the final showcase. She is once again looking forward to the upcoming festival and is excited about seeing all the wonderful performances from around NSW.

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

4.1 – Support student participation

Identify strategies to support inclusive student participation and engagement in classroom activities.

6.2 – Engage in professional learning and improve practice

Understand the relevant and appropriate sources of professional learning for teachers.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Choral speaking	A group of people narrating a poem or a dramatic piece together.
Characterisation	The way an actor plays a role, using his/her acting skills to create a character in a drama, is known as characterisation. You can show a character in the way they walk and move (body language), in the way they speak (vocal qualities) and in their reaction to events in the drama.
Contrast	Without the careful use of contrast a performance is boring and lacks tension. An obvious example of contrast is a sad scene followed by a happy one. But contrast can be created in more subtle and sophisticated ways, such as manipulating the drama to create a change in setting, use of space or rhythm.
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concentration of meaning, and the giving of shape to experience, in order to form drama. • The specific point of attention on stage at any moment created by the shaping of any aspect or aspects of the dramatic experience in such a way as to purposefully direct the attention of the audience.
Improvisation (Improv)	A form of live theatre in which the plot, characters and dialogue of a game, scene or story are made up in the moment.
Reader's theatre	A style of theatre in which the actors do not memorise their lines. Actors use only vocal expression to help the audience understand the story rather than visual storytelling such as sets, costumes, intricate blocking and movement.
Satire	Satire, artistic form, chiefly literary and dramatic, in which human or individual vices, follies, abuses, or shortcomings are held up to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony, parody, caricature, or other methods, sometimes with an intent to inspire social reform.
Staging	Staging is the process of selecting, designing, adapting to, or modifying the performance space for a play or film. This includes the use or absence of stagecraft elements as well as the structure of the stage and its components.

Term	Definition
Symbol	A symbol implies a greater meaning than the literal suggestion and is usually used to represent something other than what it is at face value. Symbolism in the theatre can be achieved via characters, colour, movement, costume and props.
Tableau	A tableau is a dramatic picture. It is generally constructed using actors in a frozen position. Tableau is usually used to describe a vivid living scene.
Transition	A transition is a change from one thing to the next, either in action or state of being. It could be a set change, exit or entrance or a characterisation transformation.

About The Arts Unit Digital Engagement

NSW Department of Education The Arts Unit provides students and teachers with highly motivating and engaging opportunities that inspire their creative potential. The Arts Unit delivers programs in dance, drama, music, visual arts, debating, public speaking, reading, spelling and special events.

The Arts Unit Digital Engagement provides online access to arts education and professional development (PD), engaging students and teachers throughout NSW.

Content is delivered by experts and accompanied by useful classroom resources. It ranges from NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) registered and non-registered courses, to virtual excursions, streamed events and extensive digital libraries. This ensures learning supports teacher accreditation requirements and is relevant, memorable and meaningful for everyone.

Register today with The Arts Unit Learning Hub to browse and enjoy high quality digital engagement content. You will be notified through the hub as new NESA registered courses are available on MyPL.

The Arts Unit Digital Engagement¹ content can be accessed as follows:

- teacher identified PD: The Arts Unit Learning Hub²
- NESA registered PD: MyPL³
- virtual excursions: Distance and Rural Technologies (DART) Connections⁴
- live streamed events: The Arts Unit's Facebook⁵ page or YouTube⁶ channel.

For further information contact:

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¹ The Arts Unit Digital Engagement: artsunit.nsw.edu.au/digital-engagement

² The Arts Unit Learning Hub: learninghub.artsunit.nsw.edu.au

³ MyPL: mypl.education.nsw.gov.au

⁴ DART Connections: dartconnections.org.au

⁵ Facebook The Arts Unit: facebook.com/TheArtsUnit

⁶ YouTube The Arts Unit: youtube.com/channel/UCPaWdupa6xCO0AWFzzS3eDQ