

# GCSE Knowledge Organiser – Drama Techniques

**Explorative Techniques** – These are used during the rehearsal process and the devising of the drama to build on ideas and develop deeper characterisation.

**Naturalistic Techniques** – These are included when you want the audience to believe what you are presenting them with, when you want them to make connections with the action on stage or feel a particular way towards a character.

**Abstract Techniques** – These are structured into the work when you want to make a statement. Either a strong start to the piece or convey a strong message to the audience or to show the range of skills and disciplines, you as an actor, can display.

## Always Remember



You need to have a firm decision before you start the devising process of what the purpose of your drama is. This will always influence how you structure it and what techniques you use.

Experiment with techniques, don't just always use the same ones. The technique you pick might not necessarily be the right one at that point so always have as many ideas as you can.

Always make sure you have included the key features of each technique you use. This will ensure you have the most effective piece and shows your discipline as an actor.

Listen to the ideas and suggestions of others, they may be really great! Using techniques is all about trial and error and learning from experience.

The more techniques you use, the more you will remember. The more you remember the more you will use, which will lead to a better piece of drama!

## Key Techniques and Glossary



### Explorative Techniques

**Conscience Alley** - Students form two lines that face each other. A character walks down the middle and the sides shout opposing opinions, ideas, thoughts etc



**Forum Theatre** – The observers are encouraged to stop the action when they feel necessary and suggest different actions. The actors can also ask for help

**Spoken Thoughts** - When the action freezes and a character speaks his/her **thoughts** aloud in order to add tension, provide information, or for some other purpose.



**Marking the Moment** - A **dramatic** technique used to highlight a **key moment** in a scene or role play. This can be done in a number of different ways: for example through slow-motion, a freeze-frame, narration, thought-tracking or music.

**Sound Scape** - A combination of sounds and/or words that try to create a location or environment by being performed with a variety of skills EG volume, repetition, pace.



**Physical Theatre** - Where you use your own body or group of bodies to physically create a prop. Focusing on using physical movement to tell a story.

**Cross Cutting/ Split Screen** - Two or more scenes are present on the stage at the same time and are intercut to develop a story or characters. Whichever action is moving the others remain still.



**Mime** - A technique where action, character and emotion are suggested, without words using only expression, gesture and movement.

**Direct Address** - Where the actor in or out of character speaks directly to the audience to create irony, inform them of off stage action or involve them in the drama.



### Naturalistic Techniques

**Hot Seating** – A character is questioned on their motivation, decisions, behaviour or background. The method is used to develop a role



**Role Play** - The imitating of characters, behaviour, locations and situations that are different from yourself

**Narration** - The act or process of telling a story or describing what happens. This is usually directed at the audience and can fill gaps between events/scenes.



**Choral Speaking** - A group of actors narrating a poem or dramatic piece. This is often using various voice combinations and contrasts to bring out the **meaning**.

**Essence Machine** - Using simple repetitive sounds and movements that builds a picture of a location, event or situation. Each member of the group repeats one sound and one action three times.



**System of Movement** - Each member of the group has a series of actions conveying a character or location. Each action is held for four seconds before the actor moves to another position on the stage. This is usually done in silence in time with music.

**Flashback/ Flash forward** - Is a short scene in the story, earlier or later than the main idea, that interrupts the normal chronological order of the story.



**Exposition** - Is performed in role as the character and is designed to give important information to the audience quickly. Usually a character's name, age and information on the plot, other characters, past events or a back story.

**Chair Duets** – A choreographed number of movements put together to explore a theme, story or relationship. It must involve the chairs or be in close proximity throughout.



### Abstract Techniques

**Role on the wall** – This is a written document that explores the facts and feelings of a character throughout the piece



**Still Image** - This is a static picture that is used to represent people, objects, situations but also abstract concepts like emotions or atmospheres



**Slow Motion** - To move your body at a slow rate and maintain this slow pace for a period of time.