

CHURCHDOWN SCHOOL ACADEMY

GCSE DRAMA



DNA STUDENT BOOKLET

Name: _____

Tutor group: ____

Drama teacher: _____

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes (total)

40% of the qualification – 60 marks

Content overview

- Practical exploration and study of one complete performance text, 'DNA' by Dennis Kelly.
- Live theatre evaluation.

Assessment overview

Section A: Bringing Texts to Life (45 marks)

- This section consists of one question broken into five parts (short and extended responses) based on an unseen extract from the chosen performance text, 'DNA' BY Dennis Kelly.

Section B: Live Theatre Evaluation (15 marks)

- This section consists of two questions requiring analyse and evaluation of a live theatre performance.
- You are allowed to bring in theatre evaluation notes of up to a maximum of 500 words.

(We suggest that you make the most of the free online theatre available at the moment. For example, the National Theatre is currently showing a play a week via youtube. While watching these play, pay particular attention to the set, costume, lighting and sound design aswell as the acting from key characters, (acting refers to the way an actor uses their voice, facial expressions, gestures, body language to convey a certain meaning or emotion).

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice

Overview

This component focuses on the work of theatre makers and the theatrical choices that are made by crucial members of the creative and production team in order to communicate ideas to an audience. As theatre makers, you will develop your knowledge and understanding of the ways in which drama can create meaning for an audience through performance.

You will explore practically how a complete performance text might be interpreted and realised from 'page to stage'. This exploration will give an insight into how texts may be brought to life for an audience and the creative roles within this process.

You will also analyse and evaluate your experience of a live theatre performance as informed members of the audience. You will develop skills to recognise the meaning created in the theatre space in order to communicate ideas to an audience. This will give a more critical and varied approach to your own work as theatre makers.

The study of one performance text, 'DNA' by Dennis Kelly

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed

	Understand the performance text in enough depth to be able to respond to the extract in the exam without the use of your own full text.
	Understand how performers use acting style and purpose, including vocal and physical skills, to create impact and meaning.
	Understand how designers use set and props to create impact and meaning.
	Understand how designers use lighting and sound, including colour and music, to create impact and meaning.
	Understand how designers use costume and make-up to create impact and meaning.
	Develop appropriate interpretations of the text from the perspective of performer, designer and director.
	Know how performers, directors and designers influence performance style, design elements and staging to communicate meaning to an audience.
	Develop vocal and physical interpretation of characters.
	Understand the performance style and theatrical conventions.
	Understand the practices used in 21 st century theatre-making.
	Know the social, historical, political and cultural context of the period in which the text was written and performed.
	Use subject-specific terminology in discussing your work as a theatre maker.

Exam Tip:

You will not be able to take your performance text into the exam. Make sure you are so familiar with it that you know exactly which part the printed section comes from. For any extract you are given, make sure you can answer these questions:

- What is happening in this extract?
- What happened earlier in the text?
- At this point, what does the audience know about the plot and characters?

DNA Summary

One

A Street/A Field/A Wood

Mark and Jan discuss a mysterious death and the action moves between the groups of characters, introducing them and their take on the death of a boy. It is revealed that this is Adam, a bullied victim of the gang. He is presumed dead after Mark and Jan tell about how they taunted and teased him and led him to a grille covering a deep shaft and threw stones at him as he walked across it and finally fell into the hole, presumed dead. Phil, a largely silent character who spends a lot of time eating and drinking, devises a plan to frame a non-existent person for Adam's death. This plan involves stealing a jumper and a pair of shoes from Adam's house, putting them in a plastic bag to avoid DNA contamination, then conspiring to make a stranger touch the jumper, and put it back into the plastic bag with his DNA on it. The stranger would thus be framed for the murder. Phil's plan also involves having one of the gang members – Brian – telling his headteacher that a fat postman with bad teeth has exposed himself to him in the woods.

Two

A Street/A Wood/A Field

Although Phil creates the 'fat postman with bad teeth' after Adam has been reported missing, the police find a man who fits the description. This is because Cathy, in an attempt to make the suspect as realistic as possible, found a postman who matched Phil's description, and contrived to have him pick up Adam's jumper when she dropped it. The plan has gone wrong and an innocent man has been framed. Brian has been asked to go to the police station to identify the man, but he is scared, so Phil threatens him to make him go.

Three

A Street/A Field/A Wood

Cathy has discovered Adam alive and living in the woods. He has clearly been affected by what has happened to him. In a shocking twist, and to save themselves from having to reveal the truth of the gang's plotting, Phil takes charge and demonstrates to Cathy how to kill Adam with a plastic bag.

Four

A Street/A Field

Jan and Mark and then Richard and Phil in brief conversations about what has happened to the others.

DNA Characters

Phil

Phil is often silent when present, although he does spend a lot of time eating and drinking and listening to what is going on around him – even if he does not appear to be doing so when, for example, addressed by Leah. When he gives his instructions to the gang, he is cold and callous in the planning of the cover-up and framing, but he also has an air of authority that makes the others obey him. Phil is a controlling character and, in the gang, this could be reassuring for the others – knowing the strength of character of the person who leads them. Although he ignores her for much of the play, when Leah finally leaves him, this is the only moment when he addresses her. He makes decisions for the gang, not all of which are accepted by all members and, in the final moments of the play he is seen with Richard – a Leah ‘substitute’, but the relationship is not the same as Phil is not eating.

Leah

She is certainly insecure in her relationship with Phil – for much of the time they are together, she is attempting to get a response from him. She threatens to leave and, when she eventually does, it is in silence, with him calling after her. Her monologues – for that is essentially what they are – use various tactics in her attempts to elicit a response from him. Although she is a member of the gang and therefore under Phil’s leadership, it is clear that she is intelligent – as in some of her monologues – and has a mind of her own – standing up to Phil over his response to Adam’s reappearance. It is unfortunate that she does not have the strength to convince others in the gang not to carry out Phil’s plans for Adam and her only course of action is to leave the gang. Leah displays a sense of loyalty towards Adam – reminding Phil about how long they have known him, for example, and she is a voice of reason at times.

Jan

With Mark, Jan is responsible for the bullying that leads to Adam falling through the grille. In her description of the events leading to this there is a sense of the cruelty of the actions.

Mark

With Jan, Mark is responsible for the bullying that leads to Adam falling through the grille. He tries to justify what they did by saying that Adam was enjoying it.

Cathy

Cathy can be described as sadistic. She shows no remorse for the gang’s actions and even finds the situation exciting and better than ordinary life. It is clear, fairly early on, that she will carry out the wishes of the leader – whoever the leader is – and she

enjoys the attentions of John Tate before Phil takes charge and she effectively becomes his deputy in the gang. She is asked to be interviewed on television – which adds to her excitement – with the thought of making money for it. It is Cathy who obtains DNA evidence from an actual postman who fits Phil's fictional description. It is not clear whether this is accidental or deliberate but, looking at the play in its concluding moments, it is probably the case that she deliberately set out to frame the postman for Adam's 'death'. Her physical violence becomes more obvious – she slaps Brian, for example, and her tone of voice is often aggressive. She is enjoying the attention.

Brian

Is easily led and is dominated by everyone, particularly Cathy. He is either the youngest or the weakest – or both – as he is the one chosen to report the fictitious incident to his headteacher as he is the one who they think is most likely to be believed. It is Brian who finds Adam living in the woods – and therefore sets in motion the chain of events that follows, although at some personal cost.

Adam

His return is pivotal to the plot structure of the play, and it is important that his reasons for not going home after recovering from his fall through the grille are articulated effectively. He has had a blow to the head from the fall and his memory of events is weak and his speech is confused and disjointed. As already stated, it is important that this is articulated effectively in order for the subsequent events to be believable within the structure of the play – the normal reaction to falling through the grille and coming round again would be to go home or to seek help from others. Adam does neither of these things, so this must be explained by the blow to the head and this needs to be effectively portrayed for it to make sense to the audience. We learn from Mark and Jan that Adam was enjoying the game they were playing, but there is no evidence of this in Adam's speech when Brian discovered him living in the woods and takes him to meet the others.

DNA Social, cultural and historical context

DNA was originally commissioned by NT Education as part of its Connections project, and was performed professionally at the Cottesloe Theatre of the National Theatre in 2008.

The play deals with a range of contemporary issues as seen through the eyes of its disaffected and alienated characters. None of them appears to be connected to anyone outside the play, and at times, even their connection with one another appears rather tenuous. We are told of events that happen 'off stage' and places the characters have been – school, the police station, for example – but the play is structured around their world of 'A Street/A field/A wood'. They are outdoors, but do not appear to be at ease with nature, and it is interesting to note in a play written in 2007 the absence of the technology that now dominates most teenagers' lives. It is certainly a play of its time and represents a particular view of teenagers but, in avoiding the obvious communication methods favoured by most teenagers, Dennis Kelly has, in fact, made DNA more of a timeless piece – and therefore less likely to date – than, for example, Enda Walsh's *Chatroom* (2005) which, like Kelly's play, was commissioned by NT Connections.

The characters are loosely drawn. Kelly tells us that their names and genders are suggestions only and can be changed to suit performers, which makes their actions and reactions more important to the way the plot unfolds than their gender. The characters live within the world of the play and the events that brought them there, and they rarely comment on anything other than their immediate world and the complications of the relationships through which they explore it. Events outside their world – such as the bullying of Adam, or the collection of DNA, are reported in such a way that the audience is invited to question their accuracy as recounted by what are, on the whole, unreliable witnesses.

The play is divided into four sections, each of a similar structure and all centred round the same basic locations – making the staging of the play both simple and challenging, depending on the kind of stage space to be used. The episodes within the four sections are made up of confrontational situations,

with, for example, Leah and Phil's exchanges framed around her addressing him with no verbal response from him, creating exchanges that are constructed as a series of monologues. At other times – with Jan and Mark, for example – it is as if two characters are speaking as one, completing each other's sentences as they describe what happened to Adam.

Lack of communication between characters not only helps to create powerful dramatic tension that often explodes into furious argument but is also indicative of many in our society who find it difficult to connect with others on a one-to-one basis or in telling a story can only do so through lines learned and repeated.

DNA, as a drama, takes the negativity and nihilism of a group of teenagers to a new level. We see no redeeming features in any of the characters – where there might have been a counter-argument to Phil's plotting, the character is confined to his room, as in the case of John Tate, or moves schools, as in the case of Leah. Presenting this particular view of teenage life challenges audiences both to understand that there is a whole world of experience going on under our noses that we will never know about, and to recognise that the two boys who murdered James Bulger in 1993 were ten years old at the time – younger than any of the characters in Kelly's play.

As a result not only of the initial act of violence but also of Phil's solution to Adam's return, this play has provoked intense discussion about right and wrong and our responsibility for each other. It plays out almost like a Greek tragedy or a Shakespearean plot for modern times. In a society that is supposedly governed and driven by a moral code, there is nothing moral in the actions of these characters.

Often performed by youth groups and schools/colleges, Kelly's play resonates in its accessibility for a younger audience and performers.

DNA Themes

Gender identity

What might be less obvious in the play is the extent to which Kelly's declaration that the characters' names and genders can be changed would influence not only the dynamics of the gang but also the impact of individual actions on the audience. Kelly is saying that it does not matter whether the characters are male or female, that either sex is capable of carrying out these actions and of being affected by them. Being part of the gang is not about gender, but about an attitude that enables you to belong. An all-female, all-male or reversed-gender cast would enable an exploration of 21st-century gender identity.

Gangs and belonging

In the episodic structure of the opening duologues, Kelly presents a build-up to the identity of the individuals in the gang before bringing them together to react to the news of Adam's death. They are seen in disparate pairings at first, and the nature of what they have done is revealed gradually through their reaction to the death of Adam, particularly in relation to the way the events are told by Jan and Mark.

John Tate attempts to ban the word 'death', resulting in an attempt by Richard to take control of the gang. Power struggles ensue and sides are taken. The intervention of Phil – largely silent until this point – gives the plot its sinister twist and explores the nature of belonging and how far gang members are prepared to go to be part of the gang. Phil has not spoken up to this point, despite his girlfriend, Leah, attempting to engage him in conversation. Now he sets out a plan to shift the blame for Adam's death away from the group – with DNA as part of the cover.

Jan, in her description of the attack on Adam, appears to relish her role in it. Cathy, having found a match for the fictitious description of the alleged attacker, assumes the role of gang leader by the end of the play, while Leah leaves, unable to cope with Phil's response to Adam's reappearance. Being part of the gang and belonging to it appear to be fluid states as members age, become disillusioned or find other interests.

Bullying

Kelly explores psychological bullying as well as the physical abuse of Adam, and clear parallels can be drawn with recent real-life cases of bullying that ruined people's lives. Phil is perhaps the most interesting character, as he does not respond to Leah's appeals for assurance and security. His seemingly callous disregard for her feelings amounts to bullying, and his reaction to her leaving at the end of the play is a surprise – it is the only time we hear him address her directly – when it is too late.

Jan and Mark recount with relish what they did to Adam when they believe he died falling through the grille because they threw stones at him.

John Tate appears to bully mercilessly to keep power. He disappears from the action early but is referenced as having 'lost it' and 'found God' as the play progresses. Kelly reminds us through a few characters that their actions clearly have consequences.

This gang – like all gangs – has its weaker members. Danny, the aspiring dentist, and Brian, for example, are used ruthlessly by Phil to help in the cover-up, but their compliance is only assured through threats of a fate like the one suffered by Adam. Everyone is arguably damaged by what happens, whether it is John Tate taking to his room, Leah moving schools, or Cathy taking on the sadistic mantle.

Responsibility

The play demands that the audience question who is ultimately responsible for the group's callous behaviour towards Adam, both in the initial attack and later, when he reappears as a feral child living under a hedge, apparently untouched by the kind of searches carried out in the real world when a child disappears.

The characters fight to save themselves from blame or, at least, to find some justification for their actions. Jan and Mark consistently refer to 'laughing' and being 'in stitches' as they recount Adam's desperately sad attempts to be accepted by the group as he was made to eat leaves, steal vodka, had cigarettes stubbed out on him and ultimately fell to his 'death'. The shock and guilt are seen in the almost throwaway exchanges such as when Leah says to Phil: 'you're not human'.

As a collective, the gang take responsibility as a shared 'burden', a device designed to keep all the gang members quiet. The structure of the gang appears to be that they are all in it together but, like Orwell's *Animal Farm*, some are more in it than others.

When, for example, Phil states, 'I'm in charge. Everyone is happier. What's more important: one person or everyone?', he is starting to make them all feel that they cannot step back from the solution to Adam's reappearance. By carrying out Phil's plan, the gang will be responsible for cold-blooded murder, not accidental manslaughter. For Phil, this seems like a small step after he has insisted that Brian positively identify the completely innocent postman whose DNA was found on Adam's jumper.

The core themes of self and group identity, bullying, cruelty and responsibility should allow all young people to develop opinions about the consequences faced by the characters in this play – and, interestingly, why there is no mention of mobile phones or other devices mentioned in the play, almost as if the gang will form its own network.

DNA Genre – Dark comedy

Exam Tip:

Remember that Q (b) (ii) will ask you to refer to the whole play. Make sure you reflect this in your answer.

Exam Tip:

Examiners will expect your answers to show the intended **IMPACT** on the **AUDIENCE** and state the way your **INTERPRETATION** creates **MEANING**. However, these exact words may not appear in the question.

Exam Tip:

When writing about your ideas, try to picture what is happening on the stage and describe exactly what you see.

Exam Tip:

Your writing needs to be in the first person.

Exam Tip:

You will be expected to support the decisions you made with reasons. For example, why did you choose live or recorded sound or music? What was your intention for the use of a particular sound effect or piece of music at specific times in the extract?

Exam Tip:

Read the extract at the start of the exam. As soon as you can, identify what is happening during, before and after the scene.

Exam Tip:

Check your answers at the end of the exam. Make sure that you have made all your points clear. Add any extra detail and information, (such as referring to context and the rest of DNA). Make sure you have answered all 5 questions on 'DNA' and 2 on Live Theatre.

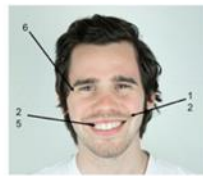
Personal Exam Tip:

Personal Exam Tip:

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS



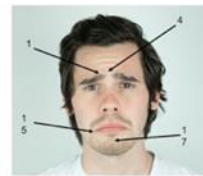
Neutral



Happy



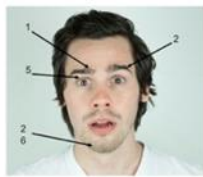
Fear



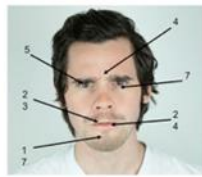
Sad



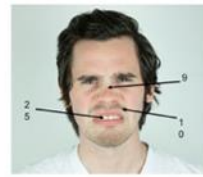
Contempt



Surprise



Anger



Disgust

Action Unit's (AU)

- 1 = Inner Brow Raiser
- 2 = Outer Brow Raiser
- 4 = Brow Lower
- 5 = Upper Lid Raiser
- 6 = Cheek Raiser
- 7 = Lid Tighten
- 9 = Nose Wrinkle
- 10 = Upper Lip Raiser
- 12 = Lip Corner Puller
- 14 = Dimple
- 15 = Lip Corner Depressor
- 17 = Chin Raiser
- 20 = Lip Stretcher
- 23 = Lip Tighten
- 24 = Lip Pressor
- 25 = Lips Part
- 26 = Jaw Drop

© 2019 EIAGroup.com



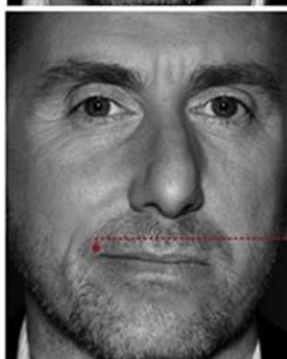
sadness

- ① drooping upper eyelids
- ② losing focus in eyes
- ③ slight pulling down of lip corners



anger

- ① eyebrows down and together
- ② eyes glare
- ③ narrowing of the lips



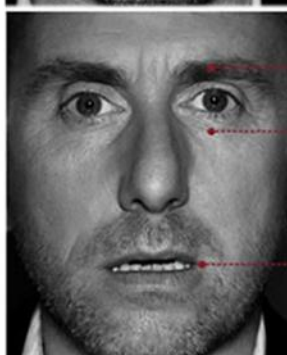
contempt

- ① lip corner tightened and raised on only one side of face



disgust

- ① nose wrinkling
- ② upper lip raised



surprise

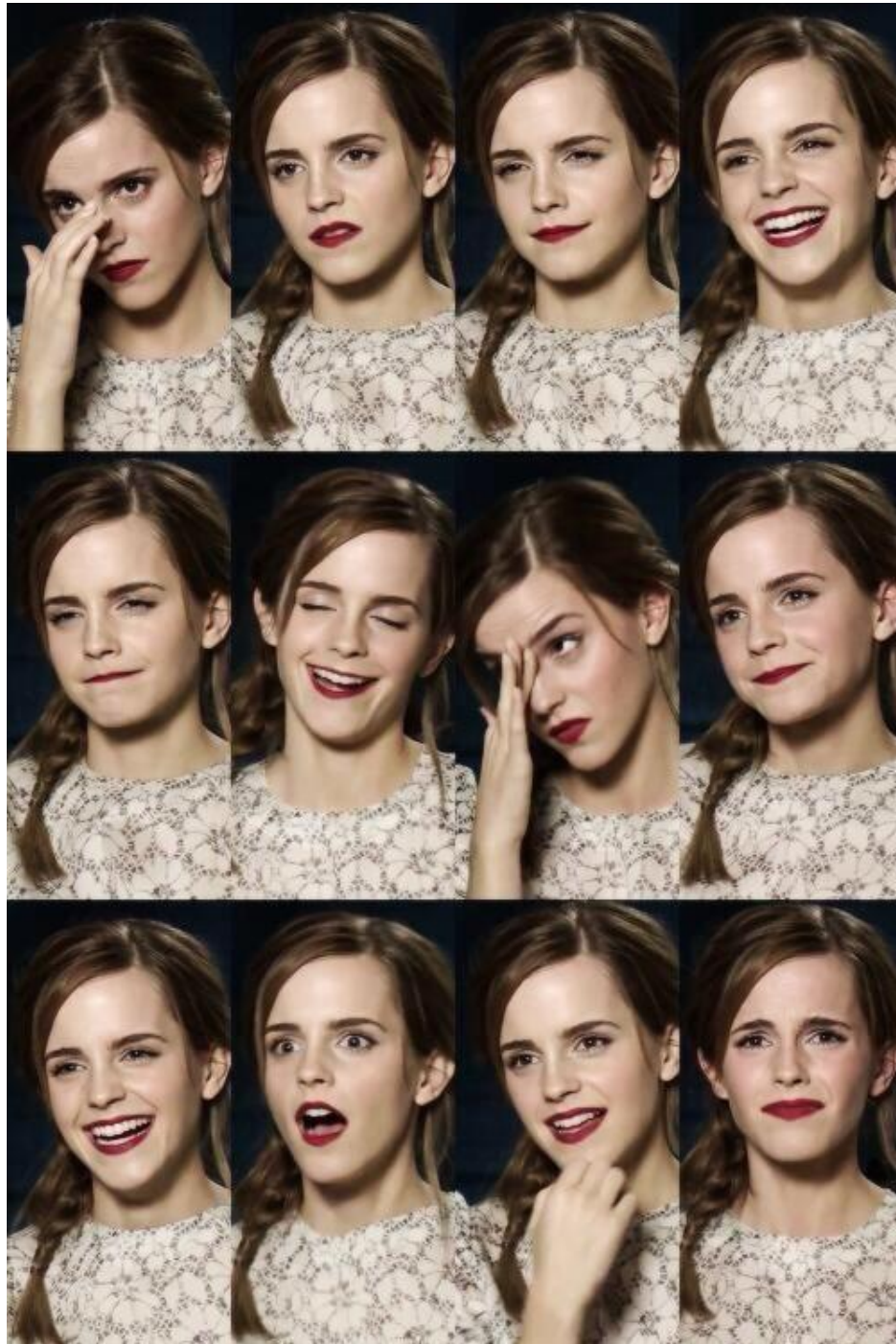
- Lasts for only one second:
- ① eyebrows raised
- ② eyes widened
- ③ mouth open



fear

- ① eyebrows raised and pulled together
- ② raised upper eyelids
- ③ tensed lower eyelids
- ④ lips slightly stretched horizontally back to ears

TASK: Using the information on the previous page, attempt to describe Emma Watson's facial expressions in as much detail as you can (try to refer to her eyes, eyebrows / lids, cheeks, lips/ mouth, nose, chin, and jaw).



Remember, it is important that you can write in detail about all the performance skills for the written exam – and be able to confidently explain your reasons why?

BODY LANGUAGE

People often use body language (kinesics) as a physical, nonverbal form of communication to convey some feeling or intention. Common body languages include postures, gestures, facial expressions, and eye movements, which give away some clues to how you may really feel. Here are some body language meanings which can help you understand what other people are conveying.

Body Language example	What does it convey?	Task (see below)
Arms crossed in front of the chest	This is one of the body language examples that indicate that one is being defensive. The body language meaning of crossed arms may also show disagreement with opinions and actions of other people with whom you are communicating.	
Biting of nails	Nail biting demonstrates nervousness, stress, or insecurity. Many people bite nails without realizing they have the habit.	
Hand on cheek	This body language example indicates that one is lost in thought, maybe considering something. When your hand is on your cheek and your brows are furrowed you may be in deep concentration.	
Finger tapping or drumming	This action demonstrates that one is growing tired or impatient while waiting.	
Touching the nose	Touching or rubbing the nose signifies disbelief, rejection, or lying about something.	
Brisk rubbing of the hands	This may show that the hands are cold, which may mean that one is excited about something, or waiting eagerly.	
Placing finger tips together	This is called "steepling," or placing fingertips together to demonstrate control or authority. This is one of the body language examples that bosses and other authority figures use to show that they are in control.	
Open palms, facing upward	This gesture is a sign of honesty, sincerity, submission, and innocence. This is how some people show submission and respect during church worship.	
Head in hands	The body language meaning of this gesture may be that of boredom, being upset, or being ashamed, so one does not want to show their face.	
Locking of ankles	Whether you are sitting or standing, when your ankles are locked, you are communicating apprehension or nervousness.	
Stroking the chin or beard	This communicates that one is in deep thought. This action is often done unintentionally when one is trying to come up with some decision.	
Ear pulling	Pulling an ear lobe can mean one is trying to make a decision, but remains indecisive about something.	
Head nodding	This gesture usually signifies agreement or bowing, a submissive gesture that shows one is going along with another person's opinions.	
Lint picking (i.e. picking bits of fluff off your clothes)	Picking of imaginary lint is another one of the body language examples of displacement gestures, which one uses to show disapproval of the attitudes or opinions of other. This action makes one look away from the other person while doing some irrelevant action.	

Catapult posture	This seated version of the “Hands-on-Hip” male posture with the hands behind the head and elbows pointed out is used to intimidate or show a relaxed attitude, thus giving a false sense of security before an ambush is made.	
Lowered head	This indicates one is hiding something. When you lower your head while you are being complimented, you may be showing shyness, shame, or timidity. It may also convey that you are keeping distance from another person, showing disbelief, or thinking to yourself.	
Standing straight, with shoulders back	This posture shows that one is feeling confident and it is often accompanied by walking with brisk strides.	
One-sided head tilt	Tilting the head suggests that one is listening with interest in what others are saying.	
Overly tilted head	This may be a sign of sympathy, playfulness or flirtation, when accompanied by a smile. However, depending on your eye, brow or mouth gestures, a tilted head may mean that you are confused or maybe challenging someone.	
Looking down, away from the body	This may indicate guilt or shame. To validate this feeling, revert back to the discussion and see if the body language meaning is the same.	
Standing, hands on hips	Can mean readiness or aggression	
Shifting of weight or foot movement	Suggests that one is impatient, nervous, excited, scared, or even intimidated.	
Sitting, legs crossed, slight kicking of foot	can mean boredom	
Sitting, with legs apart	A relaxed posture	
Walking, hands in pocket, hunched shoulders	Can mean dejection	
Eye rubbing	Can mean doubt or disbelief	
Hands clasped behind back	Can mean frustration, anger, or apprehension	
Pinching the nose bridge, eyes closed	Shows negative evaluation	
Patting or fondling hair	Shows insecurity or lack of self-confidence	
Quick tilting of head	Shows interest	
Prolonged tilting of head	Shows boredom	

Task: Name a character from DNA who could demonstrate each action in the chart, explaining where (in the script, i.e. what is happening) and why?

VOCAL AWARENESS

(Skills that involve using your voice)

PITCH How high or low the voice is.

PACE The rhythm and speed with which words are spoken.

PROJECTION (OR VOLUME) How loud or quiet the voice is.

PAUSE Stopping to emphasise a point or provide contrast and variation.

INTONATION The rise and fall of the voice to provide variation and interest.

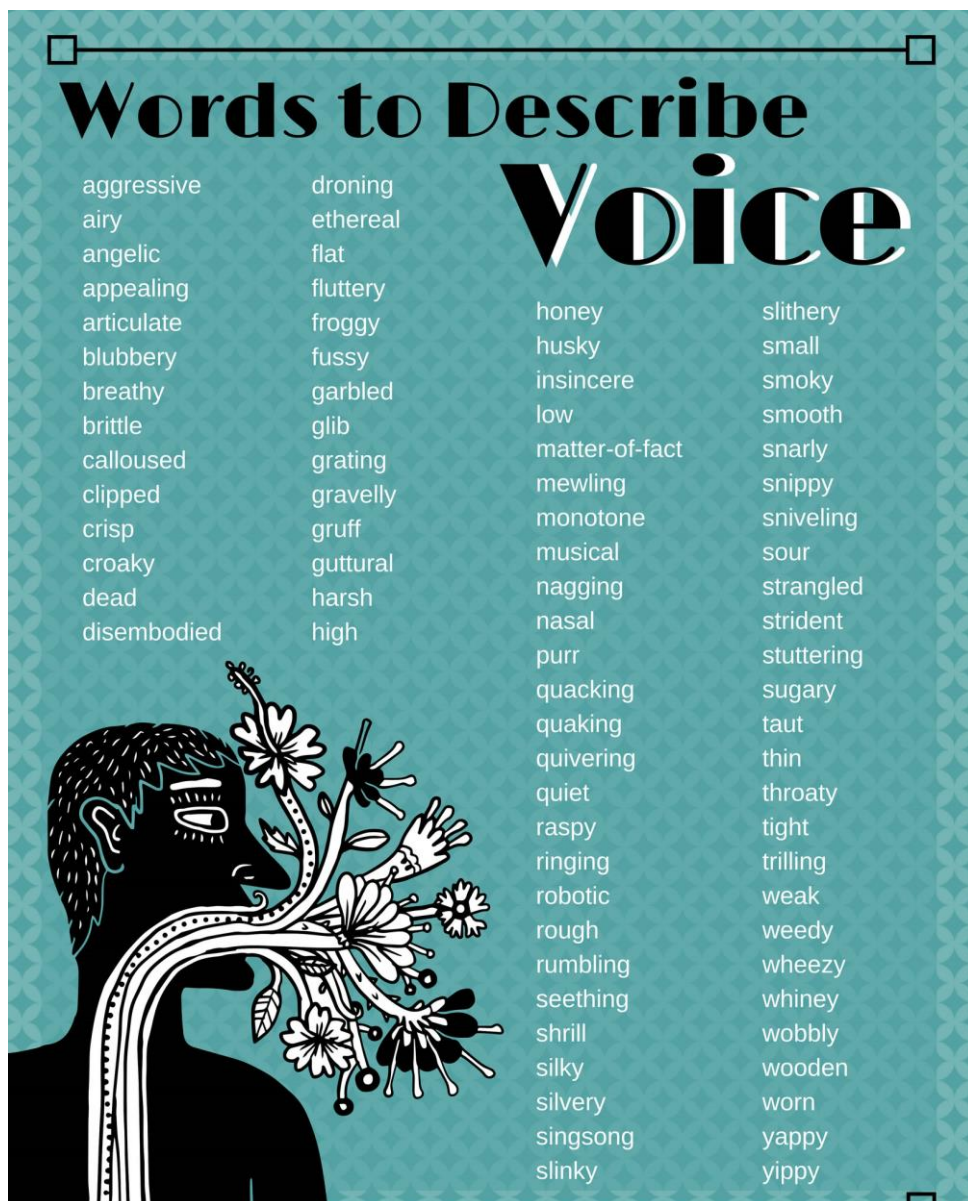
TONE How lines are said to convey meaning.

ACCENT Used to indicate where a character is from (location) or to show social class or status.

INFLECTION The ups and downs of spoken language.

EMPHASIS (OR STRESS) Used to place importance on specifically chosen words.

NUANCE Subtle changes in voice to change meaning in a text.



Task: Using the words (both charts above) to describe voice, pick any lines from DNA and describe how you think you would speak these lines if you were playing the character AND why?

CHARACTERISATION

How can you describe the character from DNA?

A List of Character Traits



active	compassionate	exciting
adventurous	competitive	fair
affectionate	conceited	faithful
afraid	concerned	fidgety
ambitious	confident	fierce
angry	confused	foolish
annoyed	conscientious	friendly
anxious	considerate	frustrated
argumentative	cooperative	funny
astonished	courageous	generous
attentive	cowardly	gentle
babyish	critical	glamorous
bewildered	cross	gloomy
bored	cruel	greedy
bossy	curious	grouchy
brave	dangerous	happy
brilliant	daring	hateful
busy	dependable	helpful
calm	determined	hopeful
capable	discouraged	hopeless
careful	dishonest	humorous
cautious	disrespectful	ignorant
charismatic	doubtful	imaginative
charming	eager	immature
cheerful	easygoing	impatient
childish	efficient	impolite
clever	embarrassed	impulsive
clumsy	energetic	inactive
cold-hearted	enthusiastic	independent

TASK: Link the adjectives above with the relevant characters from DNA? (Some may describe more than one character). This will help you to develop your vocabulary when it comes to writing about these characters.

ORIGINAL CONTEXT

These photos are from the original performance of DNA at the Cottesloe Theatre, National Theatre, London in February 2008.

TASK: Label the photographs with EVERYTHING you can see (e.g. costume, lights, set, proxemics, performance skills such as facial expressions and body language). Try to identify the characters.





(Additional information regarding the original production from the designer Simon Daws: 'The design consisted of an open square stage with a projection screen that appeared to float in the space at the rear of the stage.

The stage surface was textured to look like black tarmac and was framed by a drain cover around the perimeter.' 'For DNA the video had a forensic quality slowly moving through and exploring the spaces in which the play is set including a wood and a playing field.'

WHAT DOES THE EXAM PAPER LOOK LIKE?

SECTION A: BRINGING THE TEXT TO LIFE

DNA

Answer ALL 5 questions.

You are involved in staging a production of this play. Please read the extract in Scene 3 on pages P47-50 where Adam appears from *'They stand around a boy who looks like a tramp'* to *'Say something Phil. Pause. But Phil says nothing.'*

1 (a) There are specific choices in this extract for performers.

- (i) You are going to play Cathy. Explain **two** ways you would use vocal skills to play this character in this extract. (4)
- (ii) You are going to play Adam. He has been living in the woods and is disorientated and afraid.

As a performer, give **three** suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show his confusion in this extract. You must provide a reason for each suggestion. (6)

(b) There are specific choices in this extract for a director.

- (i) As a director, discuss how you would use **one** of the **production elements below** to bring this extract to life for your audience.

You should make reference to the context in which the text was created and performed.

Choose **one** of the following:

- costume
- staging
- props/stage furniture. (9)

- (ii) Brian has been affected by pressure and become unbalanced.

As a director, discuss how the performer playing this role might demonstrate Brian's mental state to the audience **in this extract and the complete play**.

You must consider:

- voice
- physicality
- stage directions and stage space. (12)

(c) There are specific choices in this extract for designers.

Discuss how you would use **one** design element to enhance the production of this extract for the audience.

Choose one of the following:

- set
- lighting
- sound.

Live Theatre Evaluation (example question)

2 (a) Analyse how the costume design within the performance made use of contrast to create character. (6 Marks)

2 (b) Evaluate how vocal skills were used to create tension at one key moment within the performance. (9 Marks)

Top Tip: As you work through the different scenes and characters, keep notes on your thoughts about:

DIRECTING ELEMENTS

You, as the director, has an overview of the whole production, from what you think is the play's message to the modern audience to final decisions about lighting and costume etc.

WHAT WILL BE YOUR DIRECTOR'S CONCEPT? (How will you imagine the text and its themes, ideas, mood and design, in order to have an impact on the audience?)

PERFORMING ELEMENTS (ACTORS)

'Characterisation' describes the process an actor undertakes to interpret a role. You, as the actor, will make decisions about your role and show these through your performance skills (for example: voice, physicality, movement, gesture and facial expression) to communicate your interpretation of a role to an audience.

PRODUCTION ELEMENTS **(SET, COSTUMES, LIGHTING, SOUND, PROPS)**

DNA is set in an indeterminate place and time in a space suggestive of three recurring locations. These settings are all outside and public – a street, a field, a wood. The designer must suggest, rather than realistically create, these places. Sound, lighting and costume combine to convey location, mood and atmosphere.

DNA demands contemporary clothing that reflects the reality in which these young people live. Costume can reveal personality through style choices made by individuals but in DNA the conformity of the gang culture also has an influence.

You will have to make decisions about all these elements – and be able to justify them and explain the impact on the audience.

'DNA' by Dennis Kelly Knowledge Organiser

CHARACTERS			CONTEXT		PERFORMANCE SKILLS	
PHIL	Menacing, Cold, Sinister		Original performance		Vocal	
JOHN TATE	Controlling, Manipulative, Tyrannical		When?	16 th February 2008	Pitch	How high or low the voice is.
LEAH	Insecure, Loyal, Insightful		Where?	Cottesloe Theatre, National Theatre, London	Pace	The rhythm and speed with which words are spoken.
MARK	Cruel, Malicious, Ruthless					
JAN	Bullying, Intimidating, Gullible		Why?	Intended for schools and youth groups.	Projection	(or volume) How loud or quiet the voice is.
RICHARD	Insecure, Confident, Sycophant (flatterer)		Director	Paul Miller	Pause	Stopping to emphasise a point or provide contrast and variation.
CATHY	Volatile, Sadistic, Merciless		Designer	Simon Daw (Set, Costume and Video)		
BRIAN	Nervous, Introverted, Vulnerable		Designer	Paule Constable (Lighting)	Intonation	The rise and fall of the voice to provide variation and interest.
LOU	Unsuspecting, Impressionable, Spineless		Stage	‘End on,’ bare stage with back projection		
DANNY	Ambitious, Fearful, Sceptical		Lights	Blue gels	Tone	How lines are said to convey meaning.
ADAM	Victim, Confused, Scared		Location	Contemporary Britain – Street, Field, Wood - anywhere	Accent	Used to indicate where are character is from (location) or to show social class or status.
Staging						
Proxemics	Where a performer stands in relation to other performers & any objects.		Sound	Drum & bass for transitions, distant aeroplane when Leah leaves Phil, sea gulls after Richard’s monologue.	Inflection	The ups and downs of spoken language.
Levels	Levels can be used to show status, power, perspective and variation.				Emphasis (or stress)	Used to place importance on specifically chosen words.
Sight lines	Ensures the action is visible to the audience from all angles.					
Entrances / Exits	It is important for the audience to understand where the actors have come from and where they are going. This can help put each scene into context.		Costume	Uniform (in different states) grey, blue, white	Nuance	Subtle changes in voice to change meaning in a text.
Movement	Stillness, pace, direction, size, flow, weight, control, orientation of performers.					
PLOT			Themes		Physical	
Act 1	Street Field Wood	Tension and mystery build as Mark tells Jan that someone is dead. Leah, talking to Phil, admits she is scared. The group meet, led by JT. Mark and Jan outline how they were bullying Adam, until they forced him to walk over a grille and, while having stones thrown at him, fell in. The group assume Adam has been killed. Phil concocts an elaborate plan involving a fictional postman to cover up what they have done. Later, Leah compares humans to bonobos.	Gangs / Belongin g	The whole group belong to a gang – with different pairings, relationships and friendships. Some gang members leave. Gang leaders change and try to solve the issue of Adam to protect the gang. There is a sense of loyalty and cruelty. The gang are nihilistic – they have rejected all religious and moral principles.	Gesture	Used to show how a character feels or expresses their thoughts.
					Facial Expression	Shows a character’s response to a situation or reveals their inner feelings & thoughts.
					Body language	The way a performer communicates non-verbally.
Act 2	Street Field Wood	The group find out the police have arrested a postman matching the description of the fictional ‘fat postman with bad teeth.’ This is because Cathy, in an attempt to make the suspect as realistic as possible, found a postman who matched Phil’s description, and contrived to have him pick up Adam’s jumper when she dropped it. The plan has gone wrong and an innocent man has been framed. Brian has been asked to go to the police station to identify the man, but he is scared, so Phil threatens him to make him go.	Power/ Status/ Hierarchy	The power continually shifts within the group. There appears to be a clear hierarchical structure within the characters.	Posture (or stance)	How a character stands. Could show their age, status or emotional state.
			Bullying/ Cruelty	Psychological and physical abuse of Adam. Phil’s lack of communication towards Leah is emotional cruelty. John Tate is aggressive and threatening. Other characters are bystanders in the bullying – they allow the events to happen.	Gait	How the character walks.
			Proxemics	How the performer uses stage space. Could show relationships or status.		
Act 3	Street Field Wood	Cathy has discovered Adam alive and living in the woods. He has clearly been affected by what has happened to him. In a shocking twist, and to save themselves from having to reveal the truth of the gang’s plotting, Phil takes charge and demonstrates to Cathy how to kill Adam with a plastic bag.	Identity	How many of the group members are really being themselves? Which group members are putting on an act to impress others? Which group members follow or copy others? Dennis Kelly states that the characters can be played by males or females – either gender is capable of carrying out the actions within the play.	Focus (eye contact)	Where a character is looking.
					Levels	The height of a character/actor.
Act 4	Street Field	Jan and Mark and then Richard and Phil in brief conversations about what has happened to the others.				

Drama Design Knowledge Organiser

LIGHTING			SET		COSTUME			
Considerations: Mood/ Atmosphere, Location, Time, Symbolism, Colour, Effect, Angle, Position			Considerations: Space, Materials, Colours, Location, Levels, Symbolism, Time, Entrances/exits		Considerations: Age, Status, Personality, Economic Climate, Symbolism, Practical			
Lantern Type and specials			Style	Set design is hugely influenced by the style of the play (naturalistic/ realistic, expressionist, symbolic etc).	Style	Concept of play and overall appearance.		
PAR can	Lights a large area (with an edge). Can produce intense colours.				Period	Time the play is set.		
Profile Spot	Gives a hard-edged spot of light. Highlights a performer or area.		Period	The time on history when the play is set.		Naturalistic	Accurate to the period.	
Fresnel	Gives a soft-edged spotlight which enables the lighting of precise areas. Easy to blend.		Colour	Reinforces mood, atmosphere, communicates meaning.		Symbolic	Item / colour signals to the audience.	
Barn Door	Four hinged flaps that are fitted in front of a lantern. Can be positioned to block light from reaching certain areas of the stage.		Texture	Support key themes and ideas (a metallic texture will have a different meaning from earthy textures).		Textural	The feel of the fabric.	
Floodlight	Provides lots of light to a wide area (no edge).		Backdrop	A painted cloth hung at the back of a theatre stage as part of the scenery.	Representatio nal	Single item that indicates a particular character.		
Moving heads	Automated lights that offer flexibility and variation.				Breakdown	Make a costume appear shabby or dirty.		
Gels	Coloured plastic placed in front of the lantern to alter the colour.		Projection	Used to create a set, or show film or images. Can have a distancing or dreamlike effect. <th rowspan="2">Material</th> <td colspan="2">Cotton, wool, velvet, leather, metal, lace.</td>	Material	Cotton, wool, velvet, leather, metal, lace.		
Birdie	A miniature light that is useful for hiding in parts of set.					Colour meanings	<i>Red</i>	<i>Passion, desire, love, war, danger</i>
Gobo	A small metal disc with a pattern or shape cut into it to create a specific shape (when slotted into a Profile Spot lantern).		Entrances/ Exits	Position of entrances / exits, and how characters use them, can be significant. <th rowspan="6">Colour meanings</th> <td><i>Yellow</i></td> <td><i>Joy, happiness, cowardice, caution</i></td>	Colour meanings	<i>Yellow</i>	<i>Joy, happiness, cowardice, caution</i>	
UV	Ultra violet light causes specially treated materials to look fluorescent on an otherwise blackened stage.					Cyclorama	Curved, stretched cloth around the back of the stage which gives the impression of sky or extensive space. <td><i>Green</i></td> <td><i>Growth, harmony, fertility, jealousy</i></td>	<i>Green</i>
LED	LED stage lights use light-emitting diodes (LEDs) as a light source. LED instruments are an alternative to traditional stage lighting.		Levels	Levels give a stage more visual interest, allowing different characters to communicate different status. <td><i>Blue</i></td> <td><i>Depth, trust, truth, depression</i></td>				<i>Blue</i>
Lighting Angles (position / direction)						SOUND	Considerations: Mood/ Atmosphere, Location, Time, Symbolism, Volume, Tone, Sound effects <td><i>Black</i></td> <td><i>Power, elegance, formality, mystery, death, evil</i></td>	<i>Black</i>
Backlight	The actors are lit from behind. Can be used to create shadows / silhouettes or obscure the audience’s view.		Live Music / Sound	Live music / sound is where the performers or musicians generate the music /sound on stage. <td><i>Purple</i></td> <td><i>Power, wisdom, luxury, arrogance</i></td>				<i>Purple</i>
Up-light	Lighting is angled upwards to create tension or suspense.					Recorded Sound	Sounds that have been pre-recorded and are then played through speakers/a PA system. <td><i>White</i></td> <td><i>Purity, peace, cold, clinical.</i></td>	<i>White</i>
Down Light	Where the performers are lit from the front.		Pitch	This relates to whether a sound is high or low. <th rowspan="2">Types of Staging</th> <td rowspan="2">Proscenium Arch</td> <td rowspan="2">Most common type of staging in Western Theatre - the audience sits on one side only, also known as end-on staging.</td>	Types of Staging			Proscenium Arch
Side light	Lit from the side. Can indicate another location or give a feeling of mystery.					Volume	This relates to whether a sound is loud or quiet. <td rowspan="2">In The Round</td> <td rowspan="2">Positioned at the centre of the audience, who sit around the whole stage. Creates an intimate atmosphere, is good for audience involvement.</td>	
High Front	Performers are lit from above. Provides a clear and natural effect.		Sound Effects	Can be pre-recorded or played live. Can reflect what is happening on or off stage. Can be naturalistic or abstract depending on the style of the performance. <td rowspan="2">End-on-stage</td> <td rowspan="2">Found in a studio theatre. Seats face the stage space at one end. No proscenium arch.</td>	End-on-stage			Found in a studio theatre. Seats face the stage space at one end. No proscenium arch.
Lighting Techniques						Direction	Speakers and musicians can be positioned anywhere within the space and create impact on an audience. <td rowspan="2">Thrust</td> <td rowspan="2">Extends into the audience on three sides and is connected to the backstage area by its upstage end. Greater intimacy between performers.</td>	
Cross Fade	Similar to a fade, a cross fade occurs when one lighting state fades out whilst the other is gradually faded in.		PROPS AND STAGE FURNITURE	Traverse <td rowspan="2">Like a catwalk, audience sit either side of stage. Brings audience closer to action & creates an intimate/ engaging atmosphere. Could be difficult to use without blocking sight lines.</td>	Like a catwalk, audience sit either side of stage. Brings audience closer to action & creates an intimate/ engaging atmosphere. Could be difficult to use without blocking sight lines.			
Cue	The indicator of when the next lighting state should take place (usually a line from one of the performers).					Props	Any moveable items that the performer uses on stage - does not include costume or scenery. <td rowspan="2">Promenade</td> <td rowspan="2">(Immersive) Audience members walk through the space to experience the performance.</td>	Promenade
Lighting State	A plan of which lights are being used at any one time.		Stage furniture	Parts of the set that performers can move during the performance. Can communicate location, time period or style, or the status of the characters. <td rowspan="2">Site specific theatre</td> <td rowspan="2">These spaces are chosen as a key part of the production.</td>	Site specific theatre			
Snap	Where the lighting changes abruptly from one state to the next.					Amphi-		
Fade	Gradually takes in or takes out a lighting state. This could be done quickly or over a more prolonged time period.							
Blackout	To remove all (or almost all) light on the performing area, usually done rapidly.							
Wash	An even, overall illumination over a large area.							

Focus	To aim and adjust a lens so that the light is concentrated at a focal point.	Personal props	Props that are used for individual characters. Could help find nuances in the character.	theatre	He audience sit in a large and steep half bowl shape with a circular stage at the bottom. Originated from Ancient Greece.
Intensity	A measure of strength of a light source in a particular direction.				