

Teachers - Knowledge Organiser

Plot

Teachers is a play within a play.

Three year 11 students put on a performance for their teachers. School leavers, Salty, Hobby and Gail Saunders perform an account of their time in High School (given the name 'Whitewall' for their performance).

They were particularly inspired by their time with Mr. Jeff Nixon, the new drama teacher who ignited their passion for the stage with his idealism and belief that all children should be treated equally.

At the end of the play 'Mr. Nixon' leaves Whitewall High School to teach at St George's, another school with a much better reputation.

Style of Acting

- Actors play multiple roles
- Direct address to the audience
- Social commentary veiled in humour
- Quick paced scenes
- Episodic structure
- Frequent changes of direction
- Use of different styles of text
- Colloquial language
- Exaggerated

Main Characters

Gail Saunders Loud mouthed, bossy and full of enthusiasm

Lilian "Hobby" Hobson - always caught eating and missing PE

Ian "Salty" Salt A school-leaver, bright and fresh-faced, rather dirty in appearance

Mr Nixon - The drama teacher, socialist and idealistic fancies Jackie Prime

Mrs Parry - The Headteacher loves all students and is wanting the best from them.

Ms Maureen Whitham - A fussy teacher, desperate to leave.

Bobby "Oggy" Moxon - The school bully in a modern age
Peter "Pete" Saxon - A large, frightening youth with tattoos, appears foolish.

Mr Derek Basford - The Deputy Head

Miss Jackie Prime (later Short) - PE Teacher

Social/Cultural & Historical Context

- Written in 1980's and it retains political and social relevance. Mainly concerning educational issues linked to the Thatcher years of power.
- Education changed control for LEAs to government and Whitehall - hence the name of the school as Whitehall; thus, a pun on the changes within education.
- National Curriculum was introduced in 1988 Education Reform Act.
- League tables introduced.
- Many teachers opposed the changes, and campaigned against the low pay, working conditions, and lack of morale within the industry. Over the past few years there have also
- been a significant number of changes to the education system resulting in similar problems.
- In Teachers Mr. Nixon argues with Mr. Basford (The Deputy Head) about the fairness of private education.
- Mr. Nixon believes that all children should have access to the best possible education, and that this should not be reserved for those who can afford it.
- John Godber has written this play to question the morality of any child not being given a good education and fairness to equality within the class system.



Teachers - Learning Journey

This term we will explore the play 'Teachers' by John Godber. We will look at strategies to approaching a script to communicate the playwright's intentions for performance. We will also explore the social, historical & political context of the play. After exploration, you will rehearse and perform an extract from the play under exam conditions and will be assessed in relation to the GCSE Drama assessment criteria. **This will be a mock version of Component 2: performance from text**, which will prepare you for your real exam in year 11.

By the end of this term, students will have learnt:

Performers must gain knowledge and understanding to explore how meaning is communicated through:

- themes, issues, performance conventions
- genre, structure, form, style, language and stage directions
- character relationships
- character development

How will I know how to perform in a successful way?

This will be modelled through marked examples, peer and professional performances.

How will I practice working creatively?

You will experiment in rehearsal to develop your characterisation through:

- voice: use of clarity, pace, inflection, pitch and projection
- physicality: use of space, gesture, facial expression, stillness and
- practice developing interpretations independently and collaboratively
- the development of specific artistic intentions
- learning lines, rehearsing, amending and refining text extracts in progress for performance
- performing to an audience.

How will I be assessed?

You will perform you in exam conditions in front of your peers and teacher. Your extract will last between 3-5 minutes in performance and will be out of 24 marks. There are three areas of focus to gain marks:

Vocal & physical skills
Characterisation & communication
Artistic intention



Verfrumdungeffekt (n)

Verfremdungseffekt is the German word for 'alienating the audience'.

The V-effect was developed by Bertolt Brecht as a way of distancing the audience from the action on stage.

Brecht wanted the audience to remember at all times that they were watching a play, and that the characters were actors performing.

Episodic structure (n)

The action unfolds as a series of episodes all connected but perhaps out of chronological sequence.

Colloquial language (n)

Colloquialism also called colloquial language, everyday language or general parlance, is the linguistic style used for casual (informal) communication.

Multi-role (n)

Multi-roling is when an actor plays more than one character onstage. The differences in character are marked by changing voice, movement, gesture and body language but the audience can clearly see that the same actor has taken on more than one role.

Social commentary (n)

Social commentary is an element of a narrative that levels a comment — usually a critique — on societal issues or general society as a whole.

Direct address (n)

Direct address is when a character speaks directly to the audience.