



The Trafalgar School

at Downton

SMSC in The Trafalgar School at Downton Drama Department

The student's Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural growth and development is a bedrock of most of the units of study and individual lessons in Drama, across all the years at The Trafalgar School. Indeed, they are frequently the purpose of the lesson.

Spiritual Development. Through role-play in a wide variety of situations, students are given the opportunity to see the world through other's eyes. This affords students a number of opportunities; to feel what other's feel and to see things from a different point of view. The value of this activity is enhanced by considered questioning and feedback, initially from the teacher and later from other students once they are skilled. Students are encouraged to develop a sense of right and wrong without having to be 'right' in an ego sense of the word, or, 'wrong', for that matter. In this sense they are weaned from the necessity to have something to defend - so they can let go of being defensive. Instead, they can listen and look and learn. Students are encouraged, in all practice, to keep an open mind – to 'not-judge' - particularly in their analysis of their own and others work. Peer assessment and evaluation steers them away from saying what is *good* or *bad* in each other's work. Instead, they are trained and coached to look for what is; intelligent, what is imaginative, what is thought provoking, inspiring - what is muddled, what is pedestrian, what is undeveloped. In essence, what is effective and what might be improved. An attitude of acceptance is encouraged throughout. This is not to be confused with condoning where some work may be half hearted and below a student's standard or potential. Lesson subjects, as well as lesson practice, invite students to see what is awe inspiring about this world, this life, this universe - and the people in it. Indeed, what is amazing about themselves and each other. The department aims to enable each student to experience the creative process at least once during their time here. At this level of creativity there is a close connection with their spiritual life. Exercises which involve students critiquing each other's work are often followed by tasks that require them to share what they admire or appreciate in each other's work. Texts studied include, **Mount Analogue** by Rene Daumal, which allows students to think about what is most valuable to them and what they would most like to know. It encourages them to think about those qualities that they most value in others and the qualities that they would most like to develop within themselves.

Moral. The extended scheme of work on Persuasion looks closely at the morality of a wide variety of techniques that people use to get what they want; bribery, emotional blackmail, flattery etc. Through free and structured improvisation, students engage with a number of moral issues within a number of given circumstances. The issues are investigated through role play and analysed in discussion. Written homework tasks encourage students to evaluate their learning and experience of the issues. Throughout their drama study at Trafalgar, students are given opportunities to learn a moral code that is supportive of others themselves. An ethos of mutual support is developed from a SOW in Year 7 introducing students to the concept and techniques of Personal and Interpersonal Skills (PIPS). These are the skills and qualities needed to work constructively and effectively in groups. These skills and qualities are distilled from their practice in devising work in real time. A sense of right and wrong is taught and upheld from the point of view of how to be a kind, useful, dependable and supportive member of the class, school community. Play texts and themed investigations throughout the course of study present students with scenarios and situations which allow the students to recognise and develop a healthy and constructive moral code.

Social. Drama and Theatre are essentially social activities; theatre work is made in groups and watched by groups. The social aspect is what makes this particular art form and the subject can be defined in some ways as learning through group work. Devising and rehearsing in groups allow students to learn from one another. They also allow an easy and natural exchange of ideas and information and best practice to be modelled naturally and organically. Groups are chosen and changed so that students get to work with a wide variety of their classmates in a variety of dynamics. Students get to see what role they play within a group: leader, follower etc. They are then encouraged and supported in expanding the roles that they play - being more vocal, initiating ideas or listening, being less dominant etc. In this way they get to extend their range and ways in which they can make a contribution. In peer evaluative activities students are supported in finding ways to give their opinion/viewpoint and do so in a way that is honest, kind and constructive. They are taught to avoid such judgements as *good* and *bad* about each other and each other's work. Concepts explored include status and social class. These subjects allow students to perform roles outside of their personal experience. It allows them to expand their understanding of different social groups, cultures and also see themselves in a wider context.

Cultural. The course of study in KS3 is taught from the Western Realist tradition of Constantin Stanislavski and Charles Dullin. From this cultural perspective, students are taught the skills of interpreting plays, in text and in performance. They are also taught the skills of two methods of play construction; devising and play writing. The Ingredients of a play that they learn to construct from in Year 7 are a simplification of those suggested by Aristotle in *The Poetics*. From this basis students study and practise the techniques of some non-naturalistic traditions, for example, Expressionism and Symbolism. Plays studied aim to introduce students to other cultures and cultural issues, for example, *Ash Girl* – this text considers issues of being a stranger in a foreign land, western and eastern differences and expectations of fitting in, marriage gender roles etc. Students are taken to watch performances of dance and theatre at venues in Salisbury, Southampton and London. Discussion and written work are designed and set to develop students' cultural awareness.

Empowering students to be the source of their own success ...