



2016 specification
first exams in 2018 (2017 for AS)

Artaud: A Complete Guide

For AS and A Level Edexcel Drama

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Teacher's Introduction

Antonin Artaud was a French actor, theatre director, dramatist, poet and essayist. He was born on the 4th September 1896 and died on the 4th March 1948. His works and writings have influenced many theatre practitioners including the playwright Peter Schaffer and his play *Equus*. Artaud is most known for the development of his theory of 'The Theatre of Cruelty'.

For students and teachers, the study of the theories of Antonin Artaud can provide an exciting exploration of the structure of theatre and how theatre can be pushed to its extremes. The extremes of Artaud's theories provide students with inspiration for their own practical work and provide techniques that can be used to explore texts. While written primarily to support the work of students and teachers working with the Edexcel AS and A Level Drama and Theatre Studies (2016) specifications, the activities and information within the pack can be applied to general practitioner study. In the AS specifications, the work of Artaud can be applied to Component 1: Exploration and Performance and in the A Level specification Component 1: Devising and Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice.

What is included in the resource?

This resource contains many different activities that will help guide teachers and learners through a study of the techniques of Antonin Artaud. The first section in this resource will explore who Artaud was and the historical and social context that Artaud lived and worked in. The second section will explore the techniques of Artaud and will examine how the techniques can be realised through discussions, research and practical activities. The final section will explore how the work of Artaud can be applied to the Edexcel AS and A Level syllabus.

How to use this resource

The analysis in this resource is not meant as a definitive guide to the work of Antonin Artaud but a set of resources that can be given as student-led worksheets or some workshop ideas for teacher-led activities. Each activity is labelled as either a discussion, research, practical activity, video-based activity or script work. The teacher notes sections provide some guidance as to expected responses to the comprehension activities. The teacher notes will also provide starting points for discussion and will provide pointers for teachers to include in the discussion to help steer it if needed.

Many of the practical activities will have no accompanying teacher notes as there are no right or wrong responses for the students to have. However, some of the practical activities will have an outline as to the purpose of the task and some given success criteria that will help teachers ensure the aims of the task are realised by the students.

April 2018

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Assessment Coverage

Assessment objectives for AS and A Level Drama and Theatre Studies

The assessment objectives are the same for all AS and A Level Drama qualifications

AS Drama and Theatre Studies

Component	Assessment Objectives			
	AO1 %	AO2 %	AO3 %	AO4 %
Component 1: Exploration and Performance	20	30	0	10
Component 2: Theatre Makers in Practice	0	0	27	10
Total for GCE AS	20	30	27	20

Students Must:

AO1	Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre-making process, making connections between dramatic theory and practice
AO2	Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance
AO3	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre are developed and performed
AO4	Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others

A Level Drama and Theatre Studies

Component	Assessment Objectives			
	AO1 %	AO2 %	AO3 %	AO4 %
Component 1: Devising	20	10	0	10
Component 2: Text in Performance	0	20	0	0
Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice	0	0	30	10
Total for GCE A Level	20	30	30	20

Students Must:

AO1	Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre-making process, making connections between dramatic theory and practice
AO2	Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance
AO3	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre are developed and performed
AO4	Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others

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Summary of the Resource

This resource will explore some of the key principles of the theories and methods of the practitioner Antonin Artaud.

Here is a summary of the key areas:

- Theatre of Cruelty
- The summary of *The Theatre and Its Double*
- Artaud's notion of cruelty
- Artaud and the audience/the auditorium
- Artaud's view of making everything larger than life
- Artaud's view of the actor and their training
- Rhythm and rituals in Artaud's work
- Artaud's view of the Balinese dancers and the impact this had on his theories
- Artaud's view of the use of and style of language in theatre
- Artaud's connection to the surrealists
- Artaud's view on the use of sound, lights and film in theatre
- A final brief look at Artaud's own production of *Jet of Blood* (also known as *Le Sang de la Vierge*)

Further Study

Further study could be made of Alfred Jarry and his role in the development of Dadaism.

An interesting viewing and ultimate discussion on Artaud's theories in performance is the DVD version of *Marat/Sade*. This can be purchased on DVD.

Make use of YouTube as there are many videos of people's performance which can be used by students.

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Overview of Activities

Page	Task type	Description
8	Research	Students to research Artaud and present their findings
11	Class discussion	Discussion on four key elements that Artaud used
13	Research	Artaud timeline with no gaps (optional discussion)
15	Research	Artaud timeline with gaps
22	Practical	Fast-paced warm-up
22	Practical	Pairs storytelling task
23	Practical	Whole group – Quick Freeze
23	Practical	Large group task – Physical Theatre
23	Discussion	Discussion on practical activities and on being creative
24	Practical	Solo work – Rituals to Rhythms
24	Practical	Pair work – Synchronised Movement
24	Practical	Pair work – Slow-motion Fight Sequence
24	Practical	Whole group – Extreme Reactions
29	Practical	Pair work – Clapping Rhythm
29	Practical	Whole class – Follow My Leader Rhythm
31	Video	Watch video of Balinese dancers
33	Written	Individual reflection task
35	Practical	Storytelling (no words)
35	Practical	Developing performance
35	Discussion	Whole-class discussion on the themes explored
39	Practical	Whole group – Greetings
39	Practical	Small groups – Symbols
43	Practical	Small groups – Performance out of Class
45	Practical	Small groups – Putting It Together
48	Video	Watch a video of <i>Jet of Blood</i>
50	Script work	Whole class read script of <i>Jet of Blood</i>

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Section 1 – Who was Artaud

To start your journey with Artaud you need to put Artaud into context with his time.

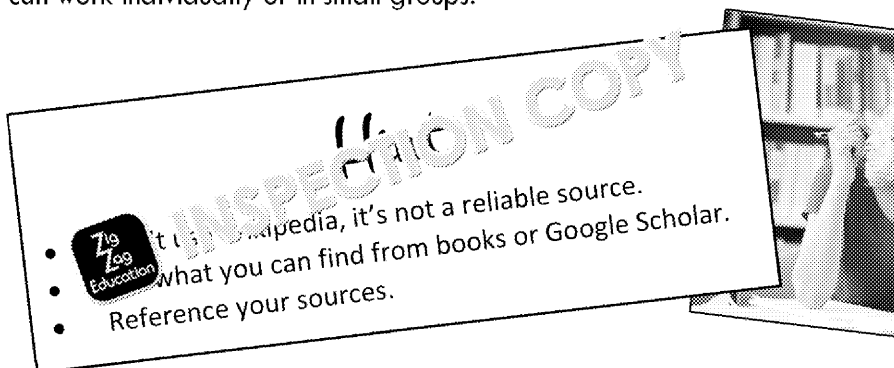
Using your research skills, find out as much information as you can in answer to the questions below.

1. When and where was Antonin Artaud born?	
2. What is his family did he have?	
3. What was his education like?	
4. List his main career highlights.	
5. What influenced Artaud's work?	
6. What were his major writings?	
7. Are there any theatre companies who have used the techniques of Artaud?	

Evidence

Using your research, you can present this as either a poster or PowerPoint presentation.

You can work individually or in small groups.



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Section 2 – Key Drama Terms

Do your own research into these key drama terms and then discuss them in your

Physical theatre



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Visual theatre



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Section 3 – The Artaud Time

	1896: Artaud is born
1900: Artaud, aged four, suffers from meningitis	
	1916: Joined the French army; sleepwalking. Was admitted to a mental health institution.
1920: Released from the mental health institution, he moved to Paris to become a writer. Realised his passion for experimental theatre.	
	1927: Artaud trained as an actor with Jean Dullin and Georges Pitoëff. Wrote several essays. As an actor, had a role in Jean-Paul Marat.
1928: Developed a passion for cinema; wrote a plan for the first surrealist film, <i>The Seashell and the Clergyman</i> . Artaud appeared in his first film, <i>Passion of Joan of Arc</i> .	
	1931: At an exposition he saw a Balinese dance. This performance inspired many of his ideas for Theatre of Cruelty.
1935: Artaud's production of <i>The Cenci</i> premiered. The play was a complete flop. The performance used the first electronic instrument, called an Ondes Martenot.	
	1936: Artaud went to study and work with people.
1938: <i>The Theatre and Its Double</i> was published. This book featured Artaud's two essays called 'The Theatre of Cruelty'.	
	1941: Artaud spent time in various mental health institutions. He was released from these institutions and lived in a clinic in Ivry-sur-Seine.
1947: Recorded <i>En finir avec le jugement de dieu</i> , to be broadcast on the radio. It was not broadcast until 30 years later.	
	1948: Artaud dies

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The Artaud timeline

	1896: Artaud is born
1900: Artaud, aged four, suffers from meningitis	
1920: Released from the mental health institution, he moved to Paris to become a writer. Realised his passion for experimental theatre.	
1927: Artaud trained as an actor at the Theatre de Dullin and Georges Pitoëff. Wrote several essays. As an actor, had a role in Jean-Paul Marat.	
1928: ?	
1935: ?	
1936:	
1938: <i>The Theatre and Its Double</i> was published. This book featured Artaud's two essays called 'The Theatre of Cruelty'.	
1946: Spent time in various mental hospitals. Released from these institutions in 1946. Lived in a clinic in Ivry-sur-Seine.	
1947: ?	
1948: Artaud dies	

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Section 4 – What is the ‘Theatre of Cruelty’

Defining Artaud’s ‘Theatre’ and ‘Cruelty’

Theatre of Cruelty is often misunderstood as just relating to violence, and those who use the narrow definition of cruelty. It would be useful when trying to get a definition to explore the two words ‘theatre’ and ‘cruelty’ separately. Artaud wrote about his idea of theatre, outlining both ‘theatre’ and ‘cruelty’ as being split from their everyday meanings. For Artaud, theatre is more than a performance with an audience just observing the performance. The theatre is the experience; the action within the performance engages the audience and can alter their experience. Artaud thought that good theatre would be a happening that would use the audience as a catalyst for their capacity for change.

When examining the phrase ‘of cruelty’ we have to look much deeper than the obvious. We don’t just refer to cruelty in an emotional or physical sense. According to scholars, cruelty is not just being about physical violence. Artaud would have seen the cruelty of life being the constant version of cruelty would represent the mundane events that we all go through with which have become unnecessary.

The Theatre of Cruelty explores situations that characters are in that put them in a state of crisis. Those events where we think that everything is conspired against us.

The Break from the Western Tradition

Early twentieth-century Paris became known as a melting pot for new inventions in the arts. At this time in Paris was heavily influenced by people who funded the theatres, many of whom had great influence. These people preferred to watch formal plays, and writers such as Germaine were not as experimental as those in other areas of the visual arts had become. The rise of the realist movement, but this movement had little impact on French theatre. As a result, at his time he began to see that his ideas of what theatre is were different from what the realist movement within theatre placed the audience on the outside of the performance. This style of theatre is the opposite of Artaud’s views. Artaud wanted the audience to be present on stage. Artaud wanted to move away from the style of theatre that focused on the excesses that society experience and that the audiences were

Information and Extension Research

Who was Georges Feydeau?

Georges Feydeau (8 December 1862 – 5 June 1921) was a French playwright, known for his farces. He wrote over 60 plays and is said to have been the starting point for a lot of

Extension Research

Using your research skills, research the works of Georges Feydeau, and research the

Questions to consider are:

- Have any other playwrights written plays using farce?
- What is the difference in style between British farce and French farce?

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Artaud and Approaches to Theatre of Cruelty

The Theatre of Cruelty is a name given that covers much of Artaud's work. This style moves away from the traditional Western theatre. Artaud wanted, through this style, to connect with the senses of the audience and connect with their subconscious thoughts and emotions. He was unable to see any play performed in this style of theatre, but he has influenced modern theatre, such as Jean Genet, Jerzy Grotowski and the acclaimed director Peter Brook. Find out about these people in Section 19 of the resource.

Defining Artaud's 'Theatre of Cruelty'

In many writings during his lifetime, Artaud tried to define 'theatre' and 'cruelty' away from the meanings that people use in everyday life. Artaud wanted to distance his performances from the raised stage with an audience just observing the action. He felt that theatrical experience 'wakes us up. Nerves and heart,' and that the audience expects 'action'.¹ Artaud wanted a theatrical performance that inspires an audience and leaves a lasting impression that cannot be forgotten.

Likewise, cruelty is not just about violence and abusing someone emotionally or physically. Cruelty needs to be examined in a deeper way. It explores the tension we experience in life, the tension that we cannot be bothered to remove from our life, e.g. the hustle and bustle of modern life. In his Theatre of Cruelty, Artaud wanted a vehicle to express everything that he saw in the world: corruption in public office, over-indulgence in passion and the battle that people fight for survival.

Break with Western Theatre

Artaud felt that the theatre of his time that he experienced only looked at social issues and not at the human condition.

To Artaud the theatre had become very limited in scope in its portrayal of the suffering of particular social groups. In his writing we can see what he wanted to explore the relationship between people towards each other the way they did. His idea behind theatre was that it should be a vehicle to express everything that he saw in the world. He believed that the theatre could help dispel all negative feelings people had and make them feel better.

Ineffectiveness of the Spoken Word

Artaud wanted to shock his audience, but he realised that language was not the tool he needed. He wanted to have no meaning and even to the point of using the phonics of words. In his writings, he wanted his performances to reveal real emotions and experiences that everyday people would not see.

Impossible Theatre

Theatre of Cruelty has been referred to as an impossible style of theatre, mainly because of the lack of firm details Artaud gave to his concept. This style of theatre has been replicated by others creating their own version of the 'theatre of cruelty' through their own work, but many of these artists stated a link to Artaud.

In Artaud's theatre his performances were designed to be brutal and they included elements of violence. He showed Artaud's thoughts on life being cruel. Artaud wanted the audience to be shocked and that the performance could access the subconscious brain.

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¹ Gorelick, Nathan (2011). 'Life in Excess: Insurrection and Expenditure in Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty'.

To Sum Up:

- Artaud created the idea of a Theatre of Cruelty.
- His work has influenced many other theatre practitioners.
- Artaud believed that theatre relied too heavily on the written word and realism from this type of theatre.
- The Balinese theatre influenced Artaud; he believed that all theatre should be based on dance, gesture, music and ritual.
- He thought that sound should be used more effectively. That screams and shouts of volume to produce an overwhelming sensory experience.
- Huge music and lighting effects would add to the spectacle. A total sensory experience.
- Artaud believed that actors needed to undergo an intensive physical training in energetic physical theatre.
- Training would also focus on breath control; breathing patterns and chants become part of the performance.
- The action may take place anywhere; there is no need for a set stage.
- There is no division between audience and the actors created by lighting, scenery or costumes.
- Theatrical effects, if used, should be integral to the performance and enhanced rather than used to mask it.
- The auditory and sensory experience and use of any technology should overwhelm the audience. He coined the term 'Theatre of Cruelty' not to describe a theatre full of torture but to ensure the audience to be unsettled and powerfully affected by the intensity of the performance.
- He saw theatre as a total experience that would be pivotal to the arts.
- This theatrical style is not about the audience sitting on comfortable seats, in a darkened theatre.

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Section 5 – Summary of *The Theatre*

Artaud wrote down many of his ideas about theatre and how he thought theatre should be. He published a collection of essays and manifestos which Artaud himself decided to call *The Theatre and Its Double*.

Artaud found within the theatre a range of what he calls the 'doubles', and they are:

- Production and Metaphysics
- Theatre and the Plague
- Theatre of Cruelty, First and Second Manifestos

Production and Metaphysics

Metaphysics is something very difficult to define when taken out of context. The word is a way of expressing something that has no rational explanation, such as elemental questions of our existence. Artaud wanted to explore metaphysics as his world was not rational. Artaud viewed the world in an irrational way.

Artaud used metaphysics to help develop his Theatre of Cruelty and there are three things that contribute to his developing notion of the theatre of cruelty, and they are:

- Balinese Dancers
- *Lot and His Daughter*, a painting by Lucas van Leyden
- The Marx Brothers

Balinese Dancers in 1931

In 1931 Artaud saw a performance of Balinese dancing in Paris, and this performance was a major influence on his own type of theatre. This performance also heavily influenced his theatre of cruelty. Artaud looked at several styles of theatre, and some of them, such as Japanese Noh theatre, had some influence on his writings. It was the Balinese dance that had the most influence on him.

Artaud focused on the movements and gestures from the Balinese dance theatre. He was impressed by the expressive and emotional nature of the dance. After returning to Paris, this was an opportunity for Artaud to see something that was a complete departure from the abstract style he wanted for theatre. During the summer of 1931 he wrote several manifestos, including 'Theatre Balinais à l'Exposition Coloniale', which appeared in the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. He started to write his first manifesto of *The Theatre and Its Double* and this saw the beginning of his period of writing. For more detailed coverage on this, see section number 10.

Key Term

Japanese Noh Theatre:

Is a classical form of Japanese theatre that has existed since the fourteenth century. It is performed on traditional stories and has a supernatural element to transform the characters. Noh theatre utilises elaborate masks, traditional costumes and has a long and arduous training process. There are many families that have many generations of Noh performers. The performance is highly stylised and the gestures and the masks represent the characters the actors are playing.

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Lot and His Daughter

In the Bible we are told the story of Lot and his daughters and how God destroyed the town of Sodom. In the story we learn how Lot seduced his daughters.

In the story Lot's family were allowed to be spared the fate of their fellow residents of Sodom as long as they left and never looked back. Lot and his daughters managed this but his wife did look back and was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot had to carry on with his daughters. The two daughters had left their husbands behind and they realised that no man would be coming to them in order to help them carry on the family, so they decided to try to get pregnant by their father.

The subject matter of the painting was popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The painting by Van Leyden is said to be part of the erotic group of paintings. If we look closely at the painting we can see the main focus in the foreground, which is Lot and his two daughters, but the image on the right of the destruction of Sodom provides a second focus.



The Marx Brothers

Artaud saw laughter as a great liberator and an emotion as powerful as any created. He thought how it was possible through film to communicate to an audience the juxtaposition of the physical and the metaphysical. He thought that his theatre would be able to replicate this juxtaposition on stage and to laughter.

Artaud described many of the films of the Marx Brothers as being close to the surreal. He mentioned the films *Animal Crackers* and *Monkey Business*. In these two films, the Marx Brothers played the role of the clown and so, by having events that are opposite to what is physical and natural, the actors created a metaphysical world.

Theatre and the Plague

The second double that Artaud saw in the theatre was the plague. Not an actual plague as an allegory for the theatre. In this double, which was recorded in a number of pictures of the physical effects of the plague to represent the theatre.

The idea came from a dormant image of a person lying ill in bed while the effects of the plague pushed the body to the extremes. Artaud related this to theatre and the gestures of the body to the extremes. Artaud was also thinking about the breakdown of society during a plague pushed to its extremes. Artaud wanted to see the 'breakdown' of the bourgeoisie and the rich of Paris had on theatre and the representation of their values.

Theatre of Cruelty

Cruelty is Artaud's third double. We will explore the Theatre of Cruelty in the next section. Here we are looking at what Artaud meant by 'cruelty'. He wanted directors and theatre companies to be able to exert on the actor and the spectator.

As with Artaud's thoughts on the theatre and the plague, here he is wanting to push the audience to their end point of acceptability.

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Section 6 – To Thine Own Self

At an initial glance, the term 'Theatre of Cruelty' is misinterpreted as relating to violence. The element is being cruel to oneself as an actor. This can include pushing yourself to the limit as far as possible. Below are four exercises that will explore the notion of being cruel to oneself. When doing these, keep in mind that you need to push yourself to your breaking point.

Practical Activity 1

Warm-up:

This can either be a simple tag game or an extreme movement sequence as set out below.

Individually, find a space in the room. Listen to your leader, as they are going to call out a number between one and four. As you hear the number called out, you need to perform the shape described below. The descriptions are intended to be vague as you are expected to use your imagination. The aim of the exercise is to be cruel to oneself.

- 1 – An open shape
- 2 – A closed shape
- 3 – A reaching shape
- 4 – A twisted shape

Practical Activity 2

In pairs, you are to remain linked at the elbow for the whole of this activity. With your partner, you are going to tell a story. You must also act out the story at the same time as being linked. Only one member of the pair is only allowed to tell one word of the story. e.g. One... day... I... of...

You will be given a story title or a character. It may be a surprise.

Practical Activity 3

Quick Freeze:

As a whole group, find a space in the room. Your leader will count down 3-2-1 and you have to freeze as, then on a sound cue you are to bring the freeze to life and create a scene.

Practical Activity 4

In a large group, you are to develop a short sequence of physical theatre. The sequence is to be created by the actors in the group.

Discussion

1. How did these activities explore 'Cruelty'?
2. As performers, do we ever put a barrier in the way of our performance?
3. Artaud said that actors must be cruel to themselves. What do you think he meant?
4. Can cruelty be seen in today's world?

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Section 7 – Artaud, Audience and

Overview of Theories on Audience and Auditorium

Artaud wanted the audience to be at the centre of the productions and not just on the outside and the audience space to be one space with no separation.

Within the space created for his performances, Artaud wanted to remove the stage. This he hoped that his performance could be received directly by the audience, and themes, characters, etc. could be shared from actor to audience. He wanted the audience to be part of the performance.

The Use of Stagecraft

In his writing, Artaud gave an idea of how he saw stagecraft being used. He wanted to have the lighting bright. As mentioned above, Artaud wanted to have one space and ideally he wanted the audience in the centre of the room with the action all around them. Artaud planned to have no partition and no scenery. This was similar to the ideas of Gordon Craig, who had a vision of theatre using large puppets and masks. Artaud wanted a spectacle, he wanted a full body experience for the audience. Artaud wanted to experience the performance as if it were happening to them.

Diagram of Artaud's View on Theatre

With the audience in the centre of the space and the actors around them, this would help the lighting to fall on both the actors and the audience. This spacing would allow the audience, often referred to as spectators, to feel part of the performance rather than sitting on the outside. In Artaud's plan, he wanted the audience seated on chairs in the centre with the actors on walkways around the audience, as can be seen in the diagram below.



To conclude this section we have covered Artaud's views on the use of the actor and the space, in his writing Artaud describes how he wanted to use 'giant puppets', 'animal movements', 'movements portraying movements', 'gestures and movements with a ritualistic quality'.² Artaud wanted the actors and the audience in the same space therefore being the audience into the 'happening' Artaud wanted to break theatre as seen in Paris at that time and this new idea of using the audience and unheard of within theatre of this time. The space the performance was to take that all areas of the space could be used. Artaud wanted the audience sat in the centre (as seen on the diagram above), with actors on walkways around the space.

Assessment Top Tip



A Level Component 3: The Makers in Practice

If Artaud is your chosen practitioner, then as you work through this section make notes on the ideas Artaud wanted to use in productions. This may give you ideas for the interpretation section C as Edexcel will be expecting you to discuss in your written answers 'how the use of lighting, sound, costume, multimedia, masks, props and puppets might help to communicate the text'. Assessment coverage: AO3.



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² All quotes from Rose, Mark V. *The Actor and His Double*, Chicago: Actor Training and Research

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Section 8 – Extremes

In Artaud's theories on the theatre, he wanted everything to be larger than life. He wanted bright lighting, large puppets. As part of the actors' rehearsals they will create oversized movements that can be heard over the top of everything else happening on stage. As with the previous section, this section is about everything to the extremes, so this section continues with this notion. However, unlike the previous section where extremes were the focus of the work, this section deals with keeping the extremes

Practical Activities

- 1. Solo**
You will create an everyday 'ritual', then to a strict count of 1 – 2 – 3, create three movements that fit to the three small beats.
- 2. Pair Work**
In pairs, create a controlled movement sequence of an everyday activity, e.g. brushing your teeth.
- 3. Development Work**
In the same pairs as the last activity, create a slow-motion fight (which must end with a fall to the ground, still in slow motion).
- 4. Extreme Reactions**
Two people will present their slow-motion fight sequence to the whole class. The rest of the class are to stand facing each other. As the slow-motion is performed the lines of the class provide the sound effects. These sound effects need to be exaggerated.

Discussion

- How would you feel as an audience member if everything in a performance was done in slow motion?
- When would be the most appropriate time in a performance to use the technique of using it?

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Section 9 – Artaud’s Use of the

Artaud considered the actor to be like an athlete and he believed that breathing was the way for an actor to create emotions in their performance. For an actor, the use of breath can be the stimulus for many things such as emotion or physical movement. In his writing, Artaud wanted to show that movement was to be used in an abstract way and the breath would then form the basis of theatre. Artaud was interested in the different uses of breath and the different outcomes this would have on a performance. Inspired by his viewing of the Balinese dance, he explored the spiritual influence on their performance. Artaud wanted to explore the use of breath and its place in the spiritual world.

Artaud wanted the training he gave to his actors to be a regime, and in his writing the ideal training for actors being similar to that for athletes. Artaud explored many of these religions and formulated his ideas for the training of his actors. These religions included Hinduism and Buddhism. He looked at their chants and he examined the breath control required to perform these chants.

The Primal Scream

In Artaud’s writing he refers to the primal scream and the effect on an actor. Artaud wanted his actors to know how to scream safely while also getting the most emotional effect. The scream was to be used to make the audience feel uncomfortable. In his performance work, Artaud developed the scream between 1946 and 1948 during radio recordings, particularly in *To Have Done with the Day*. He used this radio performance as a model for his ideas for Theatre of Cruelty. Between 1946 and 1948 he explored his idea of ‘the Scream’ but it was viewed by critics as a failure. ‘Artaud’s scream was an unrepeatable gesture, moving beyond any engagement with an audience.’³

During his work as an actor, Artaud became aware of how unadventurous his performance was and Artaud wanted to free himself from this monotony. Using the scream as a tool seemed shocking to the actor and audience, but this was part of what Artaud wanted.

How to create the primal scream:

When we talk about the primal scream, we are not talking a horror film scream.

1. Start by sighing heavily.
2. Repeat this again but add more forced air. You may have got a slight rasp.
3. Now take this rasp and accentuate that sound.
4. Now take this sound and add an ‘ah’ sound. This shouldn’t necessarily be a rasp sound as though you are in a horror film but should be a sound that feels as if it comes from the depth of your chest cavity.

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³ Deleuze Studies. May2016, Vol. 10 Issue 2, p140-161. 22p.

Section 10 – Rituals

Everyday life has a rhythm and theatre can represent the rhythm of life. Through a connection with a performance. Artaud wanted the connection that audience and actor to bypass the brain. Artaud wanted to bring in elements of ancient theatre forms, which encompassed religion and the rituals of both theatre, religion, music and

Practical Activities

- PAIRS** – In pairs, you are to work out a clapping rhythm. Once the rhythm is your own, you are to perform it. Make sure you know the rhythm well.
Everyone closes their eyes. Spread the group out around the room and everyone must find their partner by repeating the clapping rhythm created.
- WHOLE CLASS** – Everyone stands in a circle. One person starts a rhythm using body percussion. Once it has been performed once it is then copied by everyone. Once this copycat technique has been established, one rhythm is chosen of starting and ending the repeated rhythm without verbal communication.

Performance Activity

Split the class in half. You are to create your own ritual.

You are to include all the Artaudian ideas explored so far:

- Rhythm
- Exaggerated movement
- Slow motion
- You must take everything to its extremes
- Use the information in section 7 and think about how you could use the actor about Artaud wanted the audience to be spectators involved with the performance.

Discussion

- In our lives what rituals do we have? What rituals do we take part in every day?
- What rituals do we have in the theatre?
- Think about your ritual activity. How successful was it?
- How did you engage the audience in your ritual? How could you have fully engaged the audience?
- What does breaking the actor/audience boundary do to a performance?

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Section 11 – Artaud and the Balinese

In 1931, Artaud watched a performance of Balinese dance and this had a major influence on his work.

Watch the following video:

 <http://zzed.uk/8217-balinese>

This video shows a performance of traditional Balinese dance.

Watch the video through a secondary to absorb the performance. Watch the video box below with a view to developing ideas, based on the work covered so far, as to why you think Balinese dance influenced Artaud.



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Section 12 – Communication to an audience

As you have just explored, in 1931, Artaud witnessed a performance by Balinese dancers. This performance helped him to develop his style of theatre. Artaud liked the spiritual and the rituals that went with this performance style. From this performance Artaud wrote a piece of writing about his ideas about theatre and that was *The Theatre and Its Double*. I suggest you get hold of a copy and read it, if you have the chance.

Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty

Through his experience and by writing *The Theatre and Its Double* Artaud could put his time his vision of the Theatre of Cruelty. Below is a summary of the main elements.

- Theatre of Cruelty was a collection of symbols, sounds and movement.
- The content of performances should mean something to everybody.
- All movements were meticulously rehearsed but still gave the feeling that the audience were to be brought to a spontaneous reaction having been taken through theatrical experiences to lead to this reaction.
- The performances were communicated directly to an audience, where the performers did not have to have a rational meaning.
- The director was to lead the creation of the performance and a playwright was not needed.
- Performances are created with spiritual meaning.

Individual Reflection Task

Using the following points, think about how you would incorporate them into a performance in the twenty-first century. Think about how the structure of the performance would change. Consider how you would engage an audience with:

- The amount of written or spoken text is limited.
- There is no text with the performance.
- Artaud referred to spoken dialogue as 'written poetry'
- Emphasis on improvisation, not scripts

You should present your thoughts as a mood board that you can share with the rest of the class.

Make sure you consider the following:

- Your own thoughts on the use of language in performance. Is it always necessary?
- How can you ensure the meaning or plot is still communicated to an audience?
- Do we use text or language properly in the theatre, or even in films? For example, is a World War I film historically accurate?

Assessment Top Tip



Edexcel A Level: Component 1 (Devising)

As part of the A Level qualification it is expected that you will carry out 'Interpretative Devising' which involves exploring 'deconstruction of text' and 'the nature of communication'. This section is where you put your ideas on the nature of communication and your mood board would show this. What text? Choose an extract from a play or chosen source material.



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Section 13 – Ineffectuality of the S

Artaud had the notion of 'universal language'. He wanted all words to be taken out of drama. He considered words to be limiting as they defined the subject matter of the performance. He wanted to break away from the theatre of the day as he thought the content of performance was too limiting. The popular theatrical style was realism, which was against everything Artaud stood for.

Practical Activity

- Ask one member of the group to tell a story of something exciting that has happened to them.
- While listening to the story the rest of the group are to look at how the story is told, looking at both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication.
- Having listened to the story, ask one member of the group to tell the story without using words.
- What impact did this activity have on the story being told?

Developing Performance

In pairs, create a simple scene where the husband comes in late from work and the wife is angry.

The scene must be shown in each of the following ways:

- ✓ Using the dialogue created in rehearsal
- ✓ Using muted drama – how much can you understand?
- ✓ Using the commedia dell'arte convention of Gromalot. Watch this video for more information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gTs9xW1-0>
- ✓ Once you have watched each version, the audience are to decide what they can understand based on the actions and gestures used to tell the story.

Discussion

What was the difference between using words and not using words?

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Section 14 – Artaud’s Use of Language

Through his plays Artaud wanted to create a new way of communicating with his audience. One of his most famous plays is *Sang* (1925), a play which was the high point of Artaud’s early career (1924–1931). Artaud gave a new meaning to language within performance. The work is a montage of short, high-contrast scenes. It is an experiment in the manipulation of language in *Jet of Blood* is considered by critics to be a play that disrupts the effect of the presentation. Artaud himself might have recognised the danger of using language because he did not utilise it in his plays. Artaud thought that we must not consider language as sacred, and that we must not take away from theatre’s reliance on the spoken word. Communication that is a mixture of language with gesture and thought. In the theatre world, Artaud pronounced that all the visual elements that accompany the speech such as the gestures and facial expressions makes to give the words their meaning. Also thrown into the theatrical melting plot is the use of music to help an audience to understand the characters and the situations.

Language and the Role of the Actor

Artaud’s ideas for a ‘new language’ were difficult for him to express but his writings in his essays and manifestos in *The Theatre and Its Double*. Artaud suggested that communication should be of dialogue which he called ‘written poetry’ and that actors should use a new bodily language that does not contain words, but signs. These signs of language were revealed through a series of experiments. This bodily language was born out of Artaud’s inspiration from the Balinese dance.

Language and the Surrealists

In much of the work of the surrealists, their interest in language was based on their interest in dreams. Artaud borrowed this premise and he used it within his poetry, which came from one of his stints in an asylum. Through his poetry he developed a use of repetition.

Here is an example of his poetry:

Klaver Striva
Cavour tavina
Scarva I
Akar Tru

This style of poetry can be traced back to poets of Dada, which predated the surrealists.

Extra Information

What was the Dada movement?

Dada was a movement that was anti-art as people thought that the values art had contributed to the start of the First World War. It soon became a type of art that was created by a group of people who were seen as trying to undermine the established order in Europe and America in 1916 and the leaders were often young and had managed to move to cities such as New York, Zurich and Barcelona.

Extra Information

What are the key features of Dada?

The main philosophy of the Dada movement was negative. Its main purpose was to challenge established ideas in new ways. There were several new art forms created during the Dada movement. The Dada movement started to create several cabaret-style performances for which they often started controversy and riots.

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Personal Research

Try to find some examples of Dada pieces of art, theatre and film.

More information about surrealism can be found in section 14 of this resource.

What Artaud Himself Said about Language

Artaud said in *The Theatre and its Double* that language cannot be defined just by its use in space as opposed to the 'infinite possibilities of spoken dialogue'.⁴ He wanted theatre to include gestures, signs, symbols, movements, but that the meanings of the words were to be lost. Language to be a language of sounds, cries, lights and onomatopoeia to create hieroglyphics.

How to Interpret the Use of Language in a Performance

It would be meaningless to say that Artaud's view of language was limited to music and rhythm. It was a complex mix of movement and rhythms. This does not at all mean that it should be used as a starting point in the same way laughter is used by audience in a performance. Speech in the theatre is used to show conflict and the daily reality of life. It is not accustomed for years to a purely descriptive and narrative theatre – a form of story-telling. It is responsible for this; this idea of the theatre which wishes a theatrical performance to be a performance for the spectator without showing one image that will shake the audience. Artaud said that a performance dominated by spoken language would create a performance that would not affect the audience.

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⁴ Bentley, E. *The Theory of the modern stage*. Penguin 2008.

Section 15 – The Surrealist Tradition

Surrealism is a movement that started in the 1920s and is known for its artworks in which the images by artists were irrational but had clear details. The movement used everyday objects and combined them to aim was to solve the earlier opposing forms of dream and reality into a perfect reality. The aim was to include the component of surprise, with surprising juxtapositions; however, many of the artworks were presented as logical, with the works being an object. Sigmund Freud's theory of the unconscious was a radical movement. Surrealism was developed from the Dada movement during the 1920s, the surrealist movement spread across the globe, and influenced the visual arts.

What are the key characteristics of Surrealism?

- The movement explored dreams and the unconscious.
- Images of perverse sexuality, immorality, decay and violence.
- To push the boundaries of socially acceptable behaviour.
- The notion of chance and impulse.
- The influence of revolutionary nineteenth-century poets, such as Charles Baudelaire.
- Focus on the mythical and the irrational.
- Artists expressed their base desires, such as hunger and sexuality.
- The birth of biomorphism and naturalist surrealism.

Biomorphism

Biomorphism is a design that focuses on natural patterns or naturally occurring shapes. Artists would take this to its extreme and would take naturally occurring shapes and put them into a new context.

Naturalistic Surrealism

Naturalistic surrealism described realistic scenes transformed into dreams, such as the work of Salvador Dalí.

What Are the Best Examples of Surrealism?

- Max Ernst, *Unconscious*, 1921. (Museum of Modern Art, New York).
- Joan Miró, *Harlequin*, 1924–1925. (Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo).
- René Magritte, *The Treachery of Images (Ceci n'est pas une pipe)*, 1929. (Louvre Museum, Paris).
- Jean (Hans) Arp, *Head with Three Annoying Objects*, 1930. (Estate of the artist).
- Salvador Dalí, 1931. (Museum of Modern Art, New York)

Best Known Surrealist Artists:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Jean Arp (1886–1966) | • René Magritte (1898–1967) |
| • Hans Bellmer (1907–1975) | • Henri Moore (1898–1981) |
| • Louise Bourgeois (1911–2010) | • André Masson (1896–1987) |
| • Leonora Carrington (b. 1917) | • Roberto Matta (1911–2002) |
| • Joseph Cornell (1903–1972) | • Joan Miró (1893–1983) |
| • Salvadore Dalí (1904–1989) | • Meret Oppenheim (1913–1985) |
| • Paul Delvaux (1897–1994) | • Isamu Noguchi (1904–1992) |
| • Max Ernst (1891–1976) | • Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) |
| • Leonor Fini (1907–1996) | • Man Ray (1890–1991) |
| • Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966) | • Kay Sage (1898–1992) |
| • Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) | • Yves Tanguy (1900–1965) |
| • Wilfredo Lam (1907–1982) | • Dorothea Tanning (1912–2012) |

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Surrealism and Symbolism

Practical Activity 1

1. The whole group walks around the room. When you cross paths with someone, you make polite sounds, but no words.
2. When given a signal, you are to increase the intensity of your sounds to show you are greeting.
3. This time you are to replace the sounds with the word 'hello'. You can keep all the other rules from the last task.



Discussion

The practical activity's aim is to help us develop a new way of communicating as if we were deaf. Did the activities meet any of what you already know about Artaud's theories? How?

- What was the difference between the communications with no words and the communications with words? Was the understanding of the situation different?
- What is the impact of the visuals of the gestures? Does it enhance the words?
- What images have you seen that make you react emotionally?

Practical Activity 2

1. In small groups, you are to create some symbols that are only allowed to use your hands. You are to use yourselves for a range of emotions that are going to be read out to you.
2. You are now going to develop a symbol for each of the following:
 - Captivity
 - Fear
 - Love
 - Betrayal by a friend
3. As you watch the symbols, think about what makes a symbol different from a word.



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Section 16 – Artaud: Sound, Lighting

With reference back to the previous section on Artaud, audience and auditorium, we wanted to use the theatre. This section will continue to explore other areas of stage design.

Sound

In Artaud's vision of the theatre he placed a high emphasis on the use of sound. During *The Cenci*, he realised the impact that sound could have on an audience. He would employ speakers in the corners and play sounds at full volume. This was to help ensure that the audience and spectators were fully immersed in the performance. For example, in *The Cenci* Artaud had the sound of church bells ringing at a volume as if they had just entered the space. He also had the name of the Cenci wife and then suddenly stopped.

Artaud wanted to use live sound as well as pre-recorded sound. He used music as an overall design element of his productions. Artaud wanted live instruments to be used and would be loud as he wanted the vibrations to be felt by the audience and help to push the audience further in the performance. He also wanted his captive audience to know that they would find unbearable.

Lighting

By the time Artaud was evolving his lighting ideas, lighting technology had started to develop. He could flood the stage with light or pick something out in a spotlight, but he was constantly looking at ways to push the technology to its limit. He wanted to explore the use of oscillating lighting effects. Obviously, we have now developed moving head lanterns and many professional theatres use moving head lanterns.

Artaud saw lighting as a force and almost a part of the action of the performance. He wanted to use lighting to distort an audience's view and we can do this today with the use of lasers and strobe lights.

Artaud and Film

Artaud started his career as a film actor, yet in his writings he was very dismissive of the theatre. Film can provide a clear juxtaposition between the live actor and the audience.

Artaud referred to the use of film as being the 'optic shock'. He wanted film to be used as a shock. Despite his background and his attempt at film, his scenario for the film *The Sea and the Land* was not a success and this could have led to his dismissal of the medium of film. Two contemporaries Salvador Dali and Luis Bunel, *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) and *L'Age de l'Or* were more than Artaud's film. *Un Chien Andalou* starts off with an eyeball being sliced by a razor.

To sum up:

- The actor and the audience to share one space.
- Sound to provide a sensory experience.
- Lighting that we would normally see today with rock concerts was used.
- Film can be used to shock through use of juxtaposition of imagery.

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Section 17 – Happening

As we have mentioned before, Artaud did not want his audience to be observers with the performance. From this, people developed the idea of a **happening**, which is a performance that involves the audience.

Happenings were popular in the 1950s and 1960s. They ranged from simple to more complex happenings where the audience are walked around to different locations.

Practical Activity

1. In small groups you are to create a happening of your own. This can either be in the classroom or taken somewhere else. Find a current news story as a stimulus.
2. You must create a performance that can involve the audience. Your performance should include movements as you explored in Section 14 *Surrealism and Symbolism*.
3. Once you have created your performance, using pieces of paper ask the audience to write one character in the performance. Read these messages out to the audience with music underneath (remember Artaud's theories on the use of music!). Find a way to deliver these messages to an audience.

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Section 18 – Putting It All Together

Practical Activity

- Split the class into smaller groups. Each group is to come up with a theme for the rehearsal process you must consider not only the content of the performance but also bringing your audience into the space. The idea is to make the audience feel involved with the performance from the start.
- You must create and present an Arabian performance. You will need to bring what you have learnt while studying to the rehearsal process.

Don't forget to bring together the following areas of study:

- Physical Theatre
- Total Theatre
- Visual Theatre
- Theatre of Cruelty
- Larger than life
- Rhythm and ritual
- The ineffectuality
- Symbolism

Assessment Top Tip



Edexcel A Level: Component 1 (Devising)

The devising element of the Edexcel specification specifically asks you to 'implement your chosen practitioner. As you are completing this task, remember all of the work as you go through the rehearsal process, record how you incorporated the techniques recorded in a written diary, a video diary or even a blog. This will prepare you for your devised piece and your eventual accompanying portfolio. You could even take a photograph and annotate the picture to highlight the methods used. Edexcel allows 'any'

Assessment Coverage:

Partial coverage of AO1: Communicate and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of a performance.

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Section 19 – Performance Focus: *Jet of Blood*

Jet of Blood (*Jet de Sang*) is a play written by Artaud. The piece was completed on 1947.

Through the play Artaud wanted to show the audience a chronological story. This slowed down. The play explored many themes which Artaud saw as prevalent in society, violence, and also showed the contrast within the world. *Jet of Blood* (which is a play) was designed to play on the senses of the audience with its sights and sounds to face their fears.

The play includes several of the following themes:

- Cruelty
- How the world shown in the play was created and destroyed
- A satire of current attitudes towards certain subjects
- The reversal within someone's lifetime of innocence and love, and lust and fear
- Juxtaposition of people with perceived honourable standards and their immoral actions
- Blasphemy
- Nature
- 'Le mal du ciel' or 'heaven-sickness'. The belief that Christians have that which can be made well by God as there is no sickness in heaven.

The images in *Jet de Sang* are repeated to show the destruction of the world being created in the performance world being created is ordered and then through natural disasters the lives are thrown into chaos and these characters are to represent the people who are affected.

The full original title of *Jet of Blood* was *Jet de Sang ou le bouc de Verre*. It is thought to be a parody of a play called *La Boule de Verre* by Sade. In both plays the main characters are:

- A Young Man
- A Young Girl
- A Knight
- A Nurse

In both plays the young couple share their love for each other and then disappear and the Nurse are the Young Girl's parents. Both plays explore the dependence of the young on the Nurse and the idealism of the young.

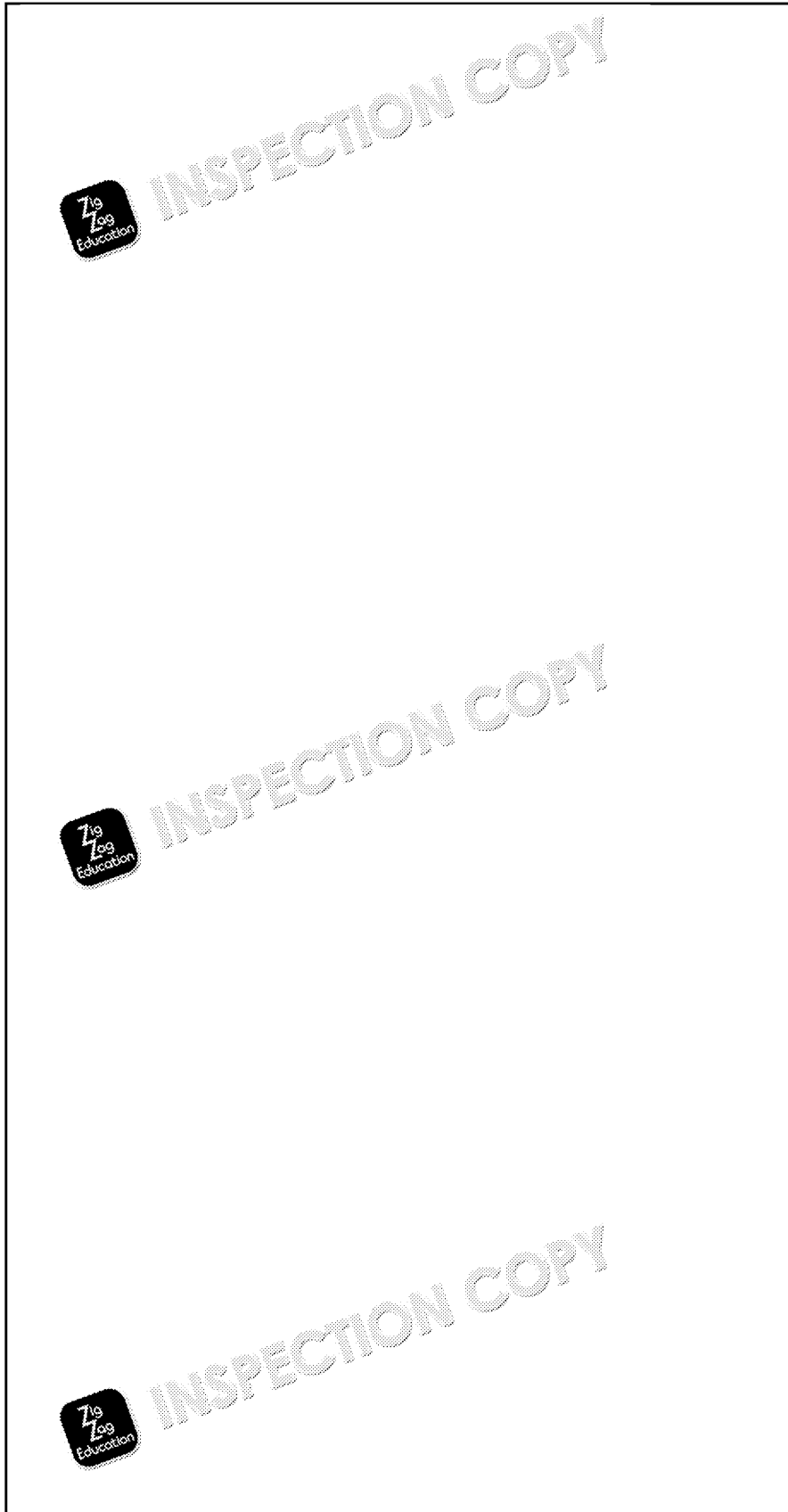
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Activity 1

The class reads through the script of *Jet of Blood*. Write down your initial thoughts and develop as a whole class a design concept for a production of this script. A copy of



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Activity 2

Watch the following video of a modern-day interpretation of Artaud's script *Jet de Sang* to see how they have incorporated the theories of Theatre of Cruelty. <http://zzed.uk/8217-jet> As you watch the video compare your design concepts to the production.

The Original Production

Although Artaud's play *Jet de Sang* was written in the 1920s, it was not staged until 1965 due to its reputation for being un-performable as it took 40 years to make it to the stage. Its extreme and the character descriptions as you can probably tell why. Artaud created the Theatre of Cruelty by getting into the audience's sense and connecting with the theatre through their emotions. As we explored in an earlier section about the ideas of the surrealists, it is why Artaud was asked to leave the group of surrealists due to the ideas he had.

Jet de Sang is not easily described as it is a play that covers love, beauty, incest and other aspects of a play that you would expect such as clearly defined characters and key events.

Jet de Sang is really a framework for a director to work from and create the performance.

Jet of Blood's Lasting Impact

Jet of Blood captures a moment in time when we can see into the mind of Artaud and ask up as to whether he was a genius or a madman. The level of surrealism contained in the play pushes the boundaries of what we think theatre is. This piece of drama is a way of getting into practice and ensuring that he can be seen as a practitioner, and not just a theorist.

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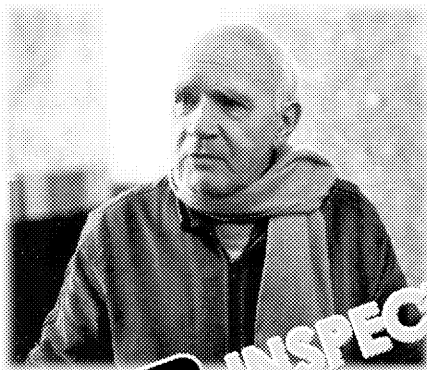


Section 20 – Artaud’s Influence and

Artaud’s Influence

In terms of Artaud being influenced by other practitioners, Artaud was influenced by the work of Alfred Jarry. Even though Artaud was 11 years old when Jarry died, he later went on to run the Alfred Jarry Theatre in Paris. Jarry was known for his play *Ubu Roi* (1896) and for being a symbolist writer. He created the term ‘pataphysics’. ‘Pataphysics’ is a branch of philosophy or science that looks at imaginary spectacles that exist in a world beyond metaphysics (philosophy looking at the essential nature of things).

In the performance of *Ubu Roi* in 1896 we can see how the work of Jarry influenced Artaud. *Ubu Roi* is a comic play but the significance of the play is the treatment of the cultural rules and how the play goes against these rules. This was the start of the Dada movement, surrealist movement and eventually the Theatre of Cruelty. Artaud had specific ideas about how his play should be performed, even costume ideas for King of the cardboard horse’s head, for he intended to write a guignol. **Guignol** is the main type of show which has come to bear his name. It represents the workers in the silk industry.

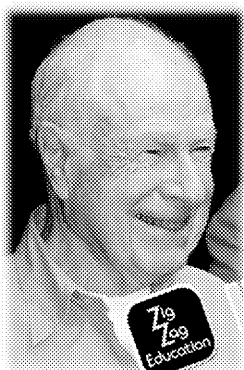


Artaud’s Influence on Other

Jean Genet (19th December 1910 – 15th April 1992) was a French writer and playwright. In his early life he was a petty criminal. His plays include *The Thief’s Journal* and *Our Lady of the Flowers*. Other works include *The Maids* and *The Screens*.

Within Genet’s plays he uses stylised rituals. The characters are typically those in society who are outcasts in some way. The key types of people in society are the poor, the sick, the old, the young, the black, the white, the gay, the lesbian.

Jerzy Grotowski (11th August 1933 – 14th January 1999) was a theatre director from Poland who had specific theories about the training of actors and how theatre should be presented. His directorial career started in 1959 with the play *The Chairs* by Eugene Ionesco. He founded a small theatre in Poland in 1959. During the 1960s his theatre company started touring and his work became more popular. In 1982 Grotowski left Poland and started work in America. Grotowski’s and Artaud’s work are similar in terms of their concept of theatre as an almost religious experience.



Peter Brook (born 21st March 1925) is an English director who has even worked with the Royal Shakespeare Company where he directed his first English spoken production of *Marat/Sade* in 1964. In 1965, Brook undertook the Theatre of Cruelty with the Open Theatre Company, aiming to explore the ideas of Artaud. His performances and productions this season included the first performance of *Blood Through the Walls*. Brook uses the same characteristics as Artaud. Brook said that Brook was able to make Artaud’s theories a reality.

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Section 21 – Links to the Edexcel Specification

As mentioned at the start of this resource, for the AS Drama and Theatre Studies can be applied to Component 1, and for A Level to Components 1 and 3.

AS Component 1:

There are two sections in this component but this resource is most suited to Section A which is internally assessed and has a total of 96 marks available. Section A makes up 60% of the total marks for the component. Section A is worth 80 marks and is broken down into 32 marks for your performance and 48 marks for your portfolio. The final 16 marks are for Section B the performance of a play. There is no requirement for the methods of a practitioner to be applied to this section.

Section A has three areas of focus:

- 1) Exploring and interpreting one key extract from a performance text and applying it to a practitioner.
- 2) A group performance / design realisation of this key extract.
- 3) Analysing and evaluating the exploration process and the key extract performance.

Students can study this component either as a performer or as a designer, or as a combination of both. The design roles are:

- costume design
- lighting design
- set design
- sound design

Practical Activity

Using your research skills: divide the practitioners listed above (they are listed in the rest of the people in your class, then find a video of a section of performance. Try to watch the piece and highlight the audience's influence can be seen.

- Jean Genet – *Les Nègres*
- Jerzy Grotowski – *Akropolis*
- Peter Brook – *Marat/Sade*

Use the rest of the page to make notes on your practitioner.

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Assessment Top Tip



AS Level Component 1: Exploration and performance

As you undertake this task, bear in mind that through your work on your chosen practitioner you should have an understanding of the 'collaboration and influence with and on other practitioners'. You should make notes on this area of study as it will help you when producing your portfolio.

In Section A candidates are to use the work of a theatre practitioner to help them create a concept of a key extract from a text. The work in this guide can help students to develop an understanding of Artaud and apply the techniques to a staging of an extract from a text either as a director or actor.

The process of applying the theories of Artaud for performance or design are to be recorded in a portfolio.

It would be helpful to keep a record of the process as students go through the process.

Rehearsal objective	<i>e.g. Block the 'Out damn spot' section for Lady Macbeth</i>
Rehearsal notes	<i>Lady M should move around the audience more and use more physicality to show emotion.</i>
Artaud theories applied	<i>We have removed language and used a series of sounds and movements to reflect the extreme emotion of Lady Macbeth.</i>
Evaluation	<i>This section works as an actor but the audience are not fully engaged as they need to be included more in to the scene.</i>
Next steps	<i>To experiment with the use of music to get vibrations through the audience.</i>

A Level Component 1: Devising

There are three main areas of focus for the devising component:

- 1) Interpreting, creating and developing a devised piece from one key extract from a text, applying the methods of one practitioner.
- 2) A group performance / design realisation of the devised piece.
- 3) Analysing and evaluating the creative process and devised performance.

For this component you are required to create an original performance from a director's work and work of a theatre practitioner to develop your performance. The component is worth up to 40% of the total marks for the A Level qualification. Your portfolio is worth 60 marks and your performance is worth 20 marks.

You can use the techniques and theories of Artaud contained in this resource to help you. You may want to consider the following:

- Artaud's relationship with the audience
- How you could apply Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty to your performance
- How you can use language in relation to Artaud's theories
- How you as an actor can work with Artaud's theories

The key areas of Artaud's resource that can be applied to the devising process are:

- The Theatre of Cruelty
- Being cruel to oneself and pushing the actor and performance to the extreme
- Rhythm and rituals
- Ineffectuality of the spoken word
- The use of surrealism

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A Level Component 3: Theatre Makers In Practice, Section C Performance Text

In section C of the written examination, that is component 3, you are expected to analyse and discuss your own directorial interpretation of a performance text for a modern play using the methods and theories of a theatre practitioner. Component 3 is worth 80 marks for the whole A Level. Section 3 is worth 24 marks.

You will be given the choice of two questions. You will be asked to show how you as the director would apply the techniques of your chosen practitioner to either the direction of performance or production design. You will be asked to refer to the original performance conditions and show how your decisions fit into these conditions.

If your question asks about aspects of performance you can apply the following techniques:

- Artaud's view of the actor and audience space
- Artaud's techniques on the use of language.
- Artaud's use of symbolism
- Artaud's break with the Western theatre

If your question asks about aspects of design you can apply the following techniques:

- Artaud's view on sound effects
- Artaud's view on lighting
- Artaud's use of film in performance
- Artaud's use of large obscure puppets and the use of masks for the actors

Remember:

You will need to consider the methodology of a practitioner. You should consider how the practitioner's methodology would be expected from that practitioner in a particular context.

Make sure you refer to the original performance conditions and discuss how they influence your overall production concept.

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Section 22 – Artaud Essay Questions for

General practice questions

1. *At the first rehearsal, Artaud rolled around on the stage, assumed a falsetto voice and fought logic, order and the 'well-made' approach. He forbade anyone to tell his 'story' at the expense of its spiritual significance. He fought desperately to tell his story and not the words.*

Raymond Rouleau – actor in Artaud's *The Theatre of Cruelty*

(Taken from *Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty*)

Using the above quote, discuss how you as a director would apply rehearsal techniques to your chosen character from your chosen text considering the techniques of Artaud.

2. Artaud has had a wide influence on many practitioners. With close reference to your chosen text, how you would use the techniques of Artaud to stage your text and highlight differences from other practitioners.

Exam-style questions

While the whole play should be given consideration, your answers to the questions should be based on the extract provided by your teacher.

1. How would you as a director apply the methodologies of Artaud to the acting production concept?

Your answer should be based on the text you have been studying.

Your answer must include:

- The complete aims of your production concept in consideration of the world of the text
- How your practical ideas will be successful in performance
- The original performance conditions of your provided text

2. How would you as a director apply the methodologies of Artaud to the lighting production concept? Your answer must focus on your chosen performance text.

Your answer must include:

- The complete aims of your production concept in consideration of the world of the text
- How your practical ideas will be successful in performance
- The original performance conditions of your provided text

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Teacher's Notes and Answers

Section 1 – Who was Artaud?

Here are some notes to guide you as to the content of the presentations.

1. When and where was Antonin Artaud born?

Artaud was born in Marseille in 1896 and died in Paris in 1948. He was an actor and critic.

What family did he come from?

Artaud's family came from a Greek background. His father was a shopfitter.

What was his education like?

He was educated at the Collège du Sacré Coeur in Marseilles, and at 14 found himself kept going for almost four years.

List his main career highlights.

- 1928: wrote the setting for *The Seashell and the Clergyman*. Appeared in it.
- 1935: staged his production of *The Cenci*. The play lasted 17 days.
- 1938: *The Theatre and Its Double* was published.
- 1947: recorded *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* for the radio. It was not broadcast.

2. What influenced Artaud's work?

- 1927: trained with directors such as Charles Dullin and Georges Pitoëff and Paul Marat.
- 1931: saw Balinese dancers at the Colonial Exhibition.
- 1936: travelled to Mexico, where he studied and lived with the Tarahumara.

3. What were his main writings?

The Theatre and Its Double (1938), various essays and *Jet de Sang* (1954)

4. Are there any theatre companies who have used the techniques of Artaud?

- The Living Theatre, based in New York
- Act 2 Cam (youth film company) use the teachings of Artaud to influence their work.

The presentations can be set as an individual holiday homework or can be done in pairs. Each member of the group has responsibility for one research question.

Section 2 – Key Drama Terminology

Below is some more information on the four discussion bubbles on the previous page as a guide to help you steer the discussion.

Physical Theatre:

Physical theatre is where the body is used to spark the audience's imagination. Everyday objects, e.g. doors, seating props, etc. are created using the actors rather than using scenery. This allows the audience a greater opportunity to engage with the world of the play. This style of theatre relies on a great deal of suggestion and for the audience to use their imagination. Not all things that are used in physical theatre are accurate due to using everyday objects. Often they are more symbolic in style.

Total Theatre:

Total theatre is a notion that all theatrical elements are equal.

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Visual Theatre:

Visual theatre is a performance style that does not rely on large amounts of speech. Behind a performance will be created instead using other elements, such as music, to support the plot of the performance or to communicate a character's or characters' emotions.

Happenings:

Happenings are often referred to in Artaud's writing and relate to a performance. The idea is that a performance was to be an experience that worked all the senses in a 'workout' for the senses.

Section 3 – The Artaud Timeline

The Artaud timeline can be used as a resource with students to give the main events. The page is a copy of the timeline with gaps; this can be a research activity for students to do in a round robin.

How to complete the round robin

- Set up tables around the room with various information on each table about Artaud's work on the surrealist movement, etc.
- Split the class into small groups and set each group at a different table of information.
- Give the group a set time at each table to read the information and to fill in the gaps. Music in the background could help and then when music ends the group changes.
- At the end, after all groups have been to each table, come together as a whole class to discuss.

Section 6 – To Thine Own Self be Cruel

The aim of this section of the pack is to get students to start pushing themselves to Artaud's notion of being cruel to oneself. Below you will find more information on this.

Activity 1:

The aim of this activity is to be fast-paced. Once you have told the students what each number represents, display it anywhere, remove it. This will push the students even more to their extremes. What the number represents and push their imagination to come up with different movements. Start off slowly and then build up the pace, and start off calling the numbers in order and then

Activity 2:

This is a fun activity and students will have to think fast. Don't tell them how long the activity is (literally one minute and not our drama teacher one minute) stop the rehearsal process. This will lead to improvisation and so they will have to come up with narration and

Suggested titles:

- A journey through a fridge
- A journey through a sick body
- A fantasy planet after a mass war

Activity 3:

The same applies to this activity as the previous one; speed is of the essence. Call out a number, freeze then quickly count down 3-2-1. Then as soon as they are in the freeze, give them a task. This will lead to improvisation and so they will have to come up with narration and

Suggested things to freeze as:

- A piece of chewing gum being eaten
- An oxygen machine
- A spoon being put into a tin of baked beans
- A balloon being blown up

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Activity 4:

As with activity 2 don't give very long in terms of rehearsal time as this will help. An example story could start with a shopper entering a store through rotating doors choosing garments to buy. Other starting points might be a fairground, a hospital group size of approximately five or six.

Discussion:

The lack of time given meant that as a teacher you need to be a bit cruel to the students to explore the task you had given them and they must also use improvisation more, the work which is not prepared as my area is school. As performers, we may put up mental barriers to ensure we present what has been rehearsed so that we can keep our focus in performance to be cruel to ourselves by pushing themselves to the extreme physically. Have they thought how did it feel looking at events in the world, is the world cruel? You could use real life stories to progress the discussion on the cruel world and maybe have a variety of art forms to show kindness.

Section 8 – Extremes**Practical activities:**

1. **Solo work** – The ritual created must be of an everyday activity such as brushing teeth. Once a ritual has been created, students must break it down into three movements and present the three movements to your counts.
2. **Pair work** – The development here is for students to work together to create a sequence of the everyday activity. The movements must match their partner's movements.
3. **Development work** – Remind students of the need for a slow-motion movement and reactions and how these reactions can be shown through the slow motion.
4. **Extreme reactions** – It is important for students in the two lines to look carefully at the sequence and look at the possible reactions they could show and how they can be shown.

Discussion:

- **How would you feel as an audience member if everything in a performance was slow motion?** Try to get the students to put themselves in the position of an audience member and think about that constant exaggerated movement would have on an audience. Would this style of performance make you feel anything with the characters and emotions? Would this style of performance make you feel anything if you were watching?
- **When would be the most appropriate time in a performance to use the technique of slow motion and what would be the aim of using it?**

If students struggle with this question, try to give them examples of moments in drama that could incorporate slow-motion, such as highly emotional scenes where a character is in a state of shock or grief.

Section 10 – Rituals**Notes on practical activities:**

For these activities to work, aim for you as the teacher to give as little input as possible. Try to act as facilitator. This is a great way of teaching students to listen to each other and focusing skills.

Performance activities:

This is the opportunity to put several of Artaud's techniques or theories together and let the students attempt at incorporating Artaud's work in their own practical work. They should continually think about the inclusion of the audience.

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Discussion notes:

Rituals are repeated actions. In ancient theatre, such as ancient Greek, these rituals were performed by actors. During the discussion try to get the students to consider the impact that rituals will have on the audience, e.g. putting on make-up, the announcements at the start of a performance. Encourage the audience back to the beginning of their theatre experiences and to show them how rituals have changed in previous eras, such as in ancient Greek theatre. These historical structures gave rise to modern theories. This could be a good point to look at how rituals can affect our daily lives. Consider how rituals can enhance or detract from a performance if they are included. For example, how mental health, could rituals be used successfully in a performance with this type of character?

Section 11 – Artaud and the Balinese Dancers

As students watch the video the second time, try to point out some key features, such as the head movements.

Below are some key things to look out for and discuss with the students:

1. The eye movements
2. The finger movements
3. Think about the rhythm of the movements, think back to the work on everyday rhythm. Look at the walking the dancers do. It's an everyday movement but think about how it is used in the dance.
4. What rituals can be seen? Look at the repeated movements that the dancers perform.
5. How does the music impact on the performance?
6. How have movements been pushed to their extremes?
7. At 5:57, what is significant about the use of the penitence dance?
8. How do the movements being shown relate to being cruel to oneself, and to others?

Helpful information:

Balinese dance is a very ancient dance form that is performed as part of religious ceremonies by the people of the island of Bali in Indonesia. Balinese dance is very expressive and uses a lot of hand and head movements. Some dance performances created tell stories using the medium of dance. The gestures: gestures of fingers, hands, head and eyes. There are said to be a number of different parts of the body that represent something within the Balinese culture.

The stories in these elaborate dance-dramas feature characters such as RANGDA that represent evil spirits.

As Hinduism is the main religion on the island of Bali, a lot of the dances are connected to the Hindu faith. These include Sanghyang Dedari that is said to be done to invoke spirits and put the dancer in a trance-like state. Not all the dances are linked to religion. Examples of those which are not are the Pendet welcoming dance and the Jaranan dance for entertainment purposes.

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Section 12 – Communication to an Audience

The list of elements of Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty can be used as discussion points for their own views on the relevance of Artaud's writings and his thoughts.

Individual reflection task:

This task is designed to help students to relate the writing and thoughts of Artaud to their own views on communication and audiences.

Students need to consider the structure of the work being presented to an audience. Is the structure appropriate or would something else be more suitable? – and always get their own responses. Would this structure engage an audience?

- Your own thoughts on the use of language in performance. Is it always necessary?**
 Try to get students to a point where they are considering language. This could be about students to want to remove language and thus remove meaning, but more about where verbal communication is removed from a performance, but where meaning is still there but just without the use of language.
- How can you ensure the meaning or plot is still communicated to an audience if language is removed?**
 This relates to the point above in terms of how an audience can still understand a character without the use of language. Can movement or facial expression replace language? Possibly guide them towards examining and analysing silent movies to show how meaning can happen without the use of spoken language.
- Do we use text or language properly in the theatre or even in films? For example, is swearing in a World War I film historically accurate?**
 Guide students to think about the use of swearing in films. Is the use of swearing in a film or is it put in to get a higher age rating, thus alienating the adult audience?

Section 13 – Ineffectuality of the Spoken Word

With the performance work of Artaud, students are trying to guide students to think about the spoken word. If students only rely on words to communicate the situation then it will make it harder to communicate the situation to an audience once language has been removed. Through your observations of a performance, guide students towards a situation where the plot is still clear but also remind them that if specific information is needed, they can use words. Artaud didn't ban words completely, but wanted them used in a way where the focus to be on the sounds words make rather than their meaning. This was done in a way where words were used in the opposite way to their meaning, and exaggerating words with emotional language reduced things and detracted from the happenings on stage.

Discussion:

What was the difference between using words and not using words?

Try to get students to consider what people can understand by actions only and what they can understand by words of a scene or a performance. You could watch a video clip here without sound and then watch with sound and see if they are right. Try posing questions about the actions and what this should be reflected in the arts. For example, should the arts represent all religions? Should casting be representative of modern day multiculturalism? Should casting be representative of a white cast as that is how it would have been in the past? These are all issues being explored by the theatre.

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Section 15 – The Surrealist Tradition

Practical activity 1:

The focus of this activity is to create symbols of the emotions being explored. The of stylistic movement. You should push the students towards almost stereotypical and away from naturalistic representations.

Discussion:

Try to guide students towards thinking about the symbols of the emotion they create.

Ask students if the image or the words used were the more powerful. What do they think or the words?

When discussing the emotional response to images in the theatre and beyond, try to guide the question: if they saw a crucifix hanging at the back of a stage in a performance what emotion would it evoke?

This can be done as word association. You could also do this as a piece of free writing.

How to do free writing:

Ask students to find their own space in the room and find a comfortable position sitting at a desk. They then put pen to paper and either write words or draw pictures of emotions that the words you call out have on them. This piece of free writing can be discussed.

Practical Activity 2:

This is an extension of practical activity 1 and is very much a focus on the use of symbols to create symbols of the emotions or situations and not naturalistic representations of them.

During the reflection try to ask what use of theatre in a play could add to the performance.

Section 17 – Happenings

As we have mentioned, Artaud did not want his audience to be observers but thereby being involved with the performance. From this theory of Artaud's people happening and the audience are involved in the performance.

- As students are working, remind them that simple is best. An example might be a train (and you may want to offer this as the starting point).
- The messages you get are real-life participations.
- How can these participations be used in our drama?

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Section 18 – Putting It All Together

As the students are working, try to get them to bring together the previous work on this activity is to try to bring together all the work on Artaud covered so far.

Remind students about the requirement to consider how the audience are going to how they are going to engage the audience in their small-scale performance. For low in the performance space and then the audience entering into the space by actors facing different directions.

Students need to think about the following areas covered within this resource:

- Physical Theatre
- Total Theatre
- Visual Theatre
- Theatre of Cruelty
- Larger than life
- Rhythm and rituals
- The ineffectuality of the spoken word
- Symbolism

Section 19 – Performance Focus: *Jet de Sang*

Activity 1:

Remind students of the work done so far in this resource on the audience and actor language and the symbols that he wanted language to make. Through facilitating consider Artaud's theories on lighting and sound.

The script for *Jet of Blood* can be found online by searching using a search engine.

Activity 2:

Let students watch the video on page 23 as there is a lot to take in. There are many in this video has a good number of techniques from Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty. At the end of the video, it is assumed that the students have been taken through or contained within this resource. Try to pick out any key techniques, such as use of students are watching the video.

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