



Style

You will explore the style and genre of Melodrama and learn about the historical context of the time period and the audience expectations of the theatre of the time. You will discover the importance of vocal and physical skills within this style, using comedic exaggeration or 'over the top' vocal and physical skills, also experimenting with 'stock characters' and the narrative formula typical of the genre to create comedy. You will devise your own frozen image sequences using your physicality and work on imitation Melodrama script 'The Black-Hearted Villain' by Paul King in order to perform extracts to the class and evaluate the success of peer performances. By this time you will be acclimatised to the Victorian style of the language and the deliberate 'artificiality' of the genre, inspired in its sensational themes by the 'sensation novels' of the 1860s and 70s with their themes of love and murder., abduction and rescue, full of tension, suspense and last minute reversals of fortune!

Melodrama

Sequence:

What you have done: from your work in Term 1 on Mime and Movement we will use this consciousness of our physical skills such as body language in performance and the role of exaggeration. You will also be encouraged to use what you already know of the genre from film and television sources.

What you will go on to do: we will use the 'larger than life' style in our Kneehigh Theatre style work on 'Adolphus Tips' next term. You will also need your new knowledge of stock characters for Commedia dell' Arte in Year 8. In Year 9, you will learn how naturalism in the theatre formed as a reaction to melodramatic theatre.



Plot:

In 'The Black-Hearted Villain' you will learn about Baron Hardacre's attempts to ruin the marriage prospects of young sweethearts Henry and Amelia, aided by his cretinous assistant Mr. Grundy. This will result in a classic hero-villain showdown for the affections of Amelia and a happy ending, restoring justice, as was expected by audiences who wanted to see good overcome evil. We will also dip briefly into 'Sweeney Todd' and discuss 'The Red Barn' to give you a wider taste of this genre.

Cross-Curricular Links:

English Literature: the study of genres including gothic novels with melodramatic features such as 'Wuthering Heights'

History: theatre history, the era of the industrial revolution and reign of Queen Victoria

PE: Balance, coordination, movement.

Magic 5 Skills

Vocal skills: Pitch, Pace, Pause, Projection, Tone, Accent

Physical skills: Movement, Facial Expression, Gait, Posture, Gesture, Body Language

Space and Interaction: Use of Space, Use of Set, Stage Position, Interaction with other Actors

Directing: Stage Directions, Blocking, Dialogue, Subtext, Message of the play, Dramatic Intention

Design: Lighting, Sound, Costume, Set, Props, Puppetry, Setting & Context



Drama Star Skills



	R	A	G
Creativity			
Teamwork			
Resilience			
Leadership			
Performance skills			
Evaluation			