

Performing Arts

Year 8 Overview

In Year 8, students develop their understanding of performance through the study of Commedia dell'Arte and World Dance. They explore the comedic conventions, stock characters, and improvisation techniques of Commedia dell'Arte, before moving on to a range of world dance styles, examining how dance reflects culture, tradition, and storytelling across different communities. Throughout the year, students strengthen their physical performance skills, creativity, cultural awareness, and ability to work effectively as part of an ensemble.

Half Term	Curriculum Plan
1	Students explore the origins of Commedia dell'Arte, learning about stock characters, improvisation and physical comedy. Drama Skills: Characterisation, mime, exaggerated movement, slapstick and vocal expression.
2	Students develop performances using lazzi, grammelot and ensemble acting techniques inspired by traditional Italian theatre. Drama Skills: Improvisation, comedic timing, physical theatre and movement.
3	Students refine and perform devised comedic performances using stock characters and theatrical conventions. Drama Skills: Ensemble work, audience interaction, rehearsal techniques and performance confidence.
4	Students explore dance styles from around the world including Gumbo, African Dance and Kathak. Dance Skills: Timing, coordination, stamina, posture and dynamic awareness.
5	Students continue exploring cultural dance styles including Bhangra, Bollywood and Dandiya. Dance Skills: Musicality, expression, storytelling and group performance
6	Students create and perform choreography inspired by international dance traditions using choreographic devices and performance skills. Dance Skills: Canon, unison, formations, call and response, levels and projection.

Independent Study:

Students are expected to rehearse practical work, research theatre and dance styles, learn key terminology, and watch professional performances to support class learning.

Useful links:

[BBC Bitesize – Drama](#)

Assessments:

In each unit, students complete ongoing rehearsal assessments, practical performances, and knowledge quizzes. Students are assessed on performance quality, creativity, teamwork, and understanding of key terminology and conventions.