

# KAMO HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA

Internal Assessment Resource

## “The Play’s the Thing”

Supports internal assessment for: Perform features of a complex drama or theatre form or period

Achievement Standard 91216 version 1

Title: Perform features of a complex drama or theatre form or period

Credits: 4

---

### Student Instructions Sheet

#### Introduction

This assessment activity requires you to perform the features of Elizabethan theatre in an extract from a play written during this period.

You will perform individually or in groups of two or three but will be assessed individually. You will perform to an audience of your classmates and teacher. The performance will be filmed.

You will also write down your intention for the role, the features you plan to use in your performance, how you will use these features, and why you have used them. This will help you clarify your understanding of the theatre form and your extract. You will hand your written work in prior to your performance.

This activity will take place over five to seven weeks of class time. You will be expected to learn lines, rehearse and demonstrate the features of the theatre form, complete the written work, and attend extra rehearsals outside of class time.

You are being assessed on your demonstration of the features of Elizabethan theatre through performance. Your use of the features should support your intention, and you should use them skilfully, convincingly, and with a sense of purpose.

To meet the requirements of this standard, you will be expected to perform in an Elizabethan style. Although technical features such as costumes, props, staging, and sets are not assessed for this standard, they may help you to demonstrate other features, such as the use of specific body, movement, or space techniques.

This activity will take place over four weeks of class time. You will be expected to learn lines, complete research and portfolio tasks, and, if necessary, to attend extra rehearsals outside class time.

#### Task One: Choose an Extract

Your teacher will guide you through a study of Elizabethan drama and its historical context. In addition, the teacher will also introduce you to a number of the plays.

Choose an extract from one of the available Elizabethan plays that you will perform for an audience of your classmates and teacher. You may work individually or in a group of two or three people. For solo performances, the length should be 5-8 minutes, for pairs, 8-10 minutes, and for trios, 10-15 minutes. Choose an extract that offers enough opportunities for all group members to perform a range of features of Elizabethan theatre.

**When you have chosen your extract, attach a copy of it to the centre of an A3 page.**

To develop an understanding of the play and of your role in it, you could read the full-length version of the play, watch a live or filmed version, or read a synopsis.

Discuss with a group or your teacher what you think the playwright’s intentions might have been.

- Who did they write it for?

- What were they influenced by?
- Does it contain messages for us today? What are they?
- How are the themes and ideas universal?
- What does your character represent in all of this?

The following headings may help you organise your points:

- A – The historical and social background; for example: -
  - social, political and economic history of London/England 1560-1642
  - geography of London at the time
  - Elizabethan world view, e.g. The Wheel of Fortune, and responses to the Medieval period
  - the place of religion and the monarchy in society
  - Shakespeare's life
  - other playwrights of the time
- B – The stage; for example
  - the playhouses,
  - the audiences
  - technology of the stage and costumes
  - use of music
- C – The texts
  - language especially imagery
  - structure
- D – The performances
  - the acting companies
  - physicality of the style
  - use of voice
  - mannerisms of movement and gesture
  - use of multiple modes of performance - dance, music, clowning, pageantry

## **Task 2                      State your intention**

On the left of your A3 page, write answers to the following questions:

- Who is your character?
- What influence does the element of time/period have on your role and extract?
- Where is your scene set and why?
- What is the situation in the scene?
- What importance does the order of events or the action have?

Keep adding to this chart as you rehearse and make discoveries.

## **Task 3                      Rehearse the Extract**

During the rehearsal period, you will need to use physical and historical conventions to convey the intention of the dramatic context. Develop your understanding of:

- the meaning of the lines you are saying
- the rhythm and pace of the dialogue – try throwing a ball to each other as a way to cue the rhythm in shared lines, or use galloping to get the rhythm flowing
- the status of the different characters
- the Elizabethan use of space – block and plot your moves
- the feelings of your character's inner self (as opposed to their outward behaviour) and how these might be conveyed
- the significance of conventions in your scene, such as the use of disguise or playing across gender.

Memorise your lines.

Practise presenting your work convincingly, capturing the essence of the dramatic context with impact. Select and use features of Elizabethan theatre to enhance the performance and aim to work with competence, control, and a sense of purpose. Your actions need to be sustained and support the dramatic context of the performance.

If you think that costumes, sets, or props will support your use of Elizabethan features, discuss with your teacher whether these are available for you to use. For example, a student playing Viola may find a long skirt useful to help her curtsy, and a student playing Puck might want a pillar to hide behind as he spies on the lovers.

## **Task 4 Explain the features**

On the right of your A3 page, write:

- the feature of Elizabethan theatre you will use
- how you will use it (link this to a line in the extract)
- why you will use it (the intended effect).

You need to identify the features for your own role, not those of others in your group. Do this for each feature you will use.

Give the A3 page to your teacher before your performance.

## **Task 5 Perform**

Perform your extract to an audience of your classmates and teacher. It will also be recorded on video.

## **Suggested resources**

Web – for example:

[www.shakespeares-globe.org/](http://www.shakespeares-globe.org/)  
[www.shakespeare-online.com/](http://www.shakespeare-online.com/)  
[www.shakespeare.palomar.edu/bestsites.htm](http://www.shakespeare.palomar.edu/bestsites.htm)  
[www.shakespeare-oxford.com/Shaklink.htm](http://www.shakespeare-oxford.com/Shaklink.htm)

Production:

- Stage models, available from the Shakespeare Globe Centre through the Sheilah Winn merchandise list
- Costumes and representative costume parts
- Elizabethan music, available from libraries and specialist music shops
- Properties such as swords, handkerchiefs
- Furniture and rostra for set

<b>Achievement with Excellence</b>	<b>Achievement with Merit</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
Perform features of a complex drama or theatre form or period effectively.	Perform features of a complex drama or theatre form or period skilfully.	Perform features of a complex drama or theatre form or period.

## Assessment Schedule

### Achieved

The student has identified features of Elizabethan drama. The student has referenced these to a planned performance. The student has used some referenced features appropriately in the performance of an extract from a Shakespearean play.

For example: a student playing Juliet in the vial scene in *Romeo and Juliet* has, in her portfolio, accurately identified features in four areas of Elizabethan drama. She has included an annotated script with features of language (heightened text; iambic pentameter, end-stopped lines and enjambment); features of space (exit and entrance; use of playing down through the tiers of audience); costume (loose nightdress that would obscure the male actor); and relationship to the social conditions of young women having arranged marriages and the control of the family (imagery; emotional intent). She has performed her extract applying some of these features clearly and appropriately. Her performance shows the intent of the scene and the role. She has explained in her portfolio why other identified features were not relevant to the scene, and has shown through her reflection that she understands the relationship between the historical period and the performance style.

### Merit

The student has identified an extended range of features of Elizabethan drama. The student has referenced key features to a planned performance. The student has applied the referenced features effectively in the performance of an extract from a Shakespearean play.

For example: a student playing Juliet in the vial scene in *Romeo and Juliet* has, in her portfolio, accurately identified several features in four areas of Elizabethan drama. She has included an annotated script with key features from each area correctly referenced. For example: language (heightened text; iambic pentameter, final couplets, end-stopped lines and enjambment); features of space (exit and entrance; use of inner room; use of playing down through the tiers of audience,); costume (loose nightdress that would obscure the male actor); relationship to the social conditions of young women having arranged marriages and the control of the family (imagery; emotional intent); social attitude to religion; structure of text (she understands where the scene falls and its relationship to the emotional pace of the full text). She has performed her extract applying most of these features clearly and effectively. Her performance shows the intent of the scene and the role. She has explained in her portfolio why other identified features were not relevant to the scene, and has shown through her reflection that she understands the relationship between the historical period and the performance style.

### Excellence

The student has identified a comprehensive range of features of Elizabethan drama. The student has referenced key features to a planned performance. The student has applied the referenced features perceptively in the performance of an extract from a Shakespearean play.

For example: a student playing Juliet in the vial scene in *Romeo and Juliet* has, in her portfolio, thoroughly identified several features in four areas of Elizabethan drama. She has included an annotated script with key features from each area correctly referenced. For example:

- language (heightened text, iambic pentameter, final couplets, end-stopped lines and enjambment)
- features of space (exit and entrance, use of inner room, use of playing down through the tiers of audience)
- costume (loose nightdress that would obscure the male actor)
- relationship to the social conditions of young women having arranged marriages and the control of the family (imagery, emotional intent, relationship to audience)
- social attitude to religion (she understands that suicide was considered sinful and that there would be a strong audience response to her actions)
- structure of text (she understands where the scene falls and its relationship to the emotional pace of the full text).

She has performed her extract applying these features. Her performance is effective, clearly showing the intent of the scene and the role. She has explained in her portfolio why other identified features were not relevant to the scene, and has shown through her reflection that she understands the relationship between the historical period and the performance style.