

Welcome to Issue Three!

Welcome to the third issue of Performing Arts Teachers Worldwide!

It's wonderful to be bringing you another edition of our newsletter, created to celebrate the amazing work of performing arts teachers around the world. Whether you teach drama in a school, run your own performing arts academy, work with young performers or teach adults, this newsletter is for you.

As we put together Issue Three, I would love to hear from you.

Are you enjoying the newsletter? We want this to be something you look forward to reading, full of ideas, inspiration and useful information that you can take straight into your own teaching.

What would you like to see in future editions? Perhaps you would like more drama games, acting exercises, teaching tips, ideas for productions, advice on running a drama school, examination preparation, or ways to encourage confidence and creativity in your students. Maybe there is a particular challenge you face in your teaching that you would love some help with.

We would also love to hear your stories!

Our aim is to build a community where we can share knowledge, support one another and celebrate the difference that performing arts education makes to people's lives.

So, please get in touch. Tell us what you enjoy, what you would change, what you would like more of, and whether you would be interested in contributing to a future issue.

This is your newsletter as much as it is ours, and we'd love you to be part of it.

Thank you for reading, for teaching, and for continuing to inspire the next generation of performers.

Until next time, keep creating, keep inspiring and keep the arts alive!

Warmest wishes,

Jacky Rom



FILM & TV | TEACHING FEATURE

Lights, Camera, Curriculum

Bringing Film & TV Into Your Drama Provision



Your students already live on screen. MN Awards, the specialist Film & TV exam board, explains how regulated Screen Acting grades can sit alongside the drama you already teach, and why you don't need to be a film expert to start.

Ask a room of young people where they last saw great acting and most won't say the theatre. They'll name a Netflix series, a film they streamed at the weekend, or a performance they watched on their phone. Theatre will always matter, and nothing replaces the thrill of a live audience. But screen performance is a craft of its own, and until recently there was no regulated way for students to train in it and be recognised for it.

That's the gap MN Awards was set up to fill.

Who are MN Awards?

MN Awards is an Ofqual-regulated exam board and the first in the UK to specialise exclusively in Film & TV. We didn't start in education. We started in the industry.

What are the Screen Acting grades?

Our Graded Examinations in Screen Acting run from Grade 1 to Grade 8, across Levels 1 to 3. They assess the on-camera craft that stage exams don't reach: performing naturally and authentically to camera, adapting to the frame as well as Green Screen and Motion-Capture inspired tasks.

Students perform with an off-camera reader, just as a professional actor would on a self-tape. The reader isn't assessed, so in class it can be another student or the teacher. Every exam is one take, either live over video call or as a recorded submission.

- Level 1: Grades 1, 2 and 3 (from around age 8)
- Level 2: Grades 4 and 5 (from around age 12)
- Level 3: Grades 6, 7 and 8 (from around age 14) - UCAS points applicable

Ages are a guide rather than a rule, and you choose material that suits your learners.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, CURRICULUM

Bringing Film & TV Into Your Drama Provision

FILMWORQ
BY MN AWARDS

MN began as a talent agency, Middleweek Newton Talent Management, and has represented actors such as Sheila Atim and Hammed Animashaun. We've produced films that have screened on Netflix and Amazon Prime, and we run screen acting courses at our studios in King's Cross alongside a co-curricular programme of filmmaking clubs in schools across London and the South East. Our qualifications are written by people who work on set, for teachers who want to bring that world into their classroom.

In short, Film & TV isn't a strand we've added to a theatre syllabus. It's all we do.

How does it work in my setting?

The best way to assess screen acting is on screen, so every exam is 100% remote. There are no minimum numbers and no examiner visits to arrange. You enter students when they're ready, not when you've filled a cohort. That makes the grades just as workable for a weekend school with a handful of keen students as for a secondary drama department.

They fit as an extra-curricular class, an enrichment option or a fresh unit within your existing drama curriculum. And because the exams are remote, centres overseas can take part too.

Screen acting often reaches students who don't see themselves as "performers" on a stage, and it builds a kind of confidence young people increasingly need: communicating clearly and naturally through a camera.

And for students who'd rather be behind the camera?

Our brand new Filmmaking qualifications assess the creative and technical work of making a film: planning, directing, shooting and editing. They're coursework based, use the phones and free editing software students already have, and are a natural second subject for any setting already running Screen Acting.

Do I need to be trained in screen acting?

If you can teach drama, you can teach screen acting. We wrote the specification with drama teachers in mind, and registered teachers get free access to our guidance on FilmworQ, including task breakdowns, framing and technical advice, and classroom exercises.

For teachers who want more confidence, we run teacher CPD in Screen Acting and Filmmaking as well as syllabus walkthroughs for whole teaching teams.

How do I sell it to my SLT?

Film & TV is one of the fastest-growing industries in the UK, yet very few schools offer a regulated qualification in it for under-18s. Adding the Screen Acting grades lets your department be one of the first, broadens who engages with drama, and gives students a recognised qualification in a field many of them dream of working in. It complements traditional theatre exams you may already run. It doesn't replace them.

How soon can I start?

Today. Registering as a teacher is free, and you'll have the guidance and resources straight away. Or, if you'd like to talk it through first, we'd love to set up a short call to show you the syllabus and help you plan how it could work in your setting.

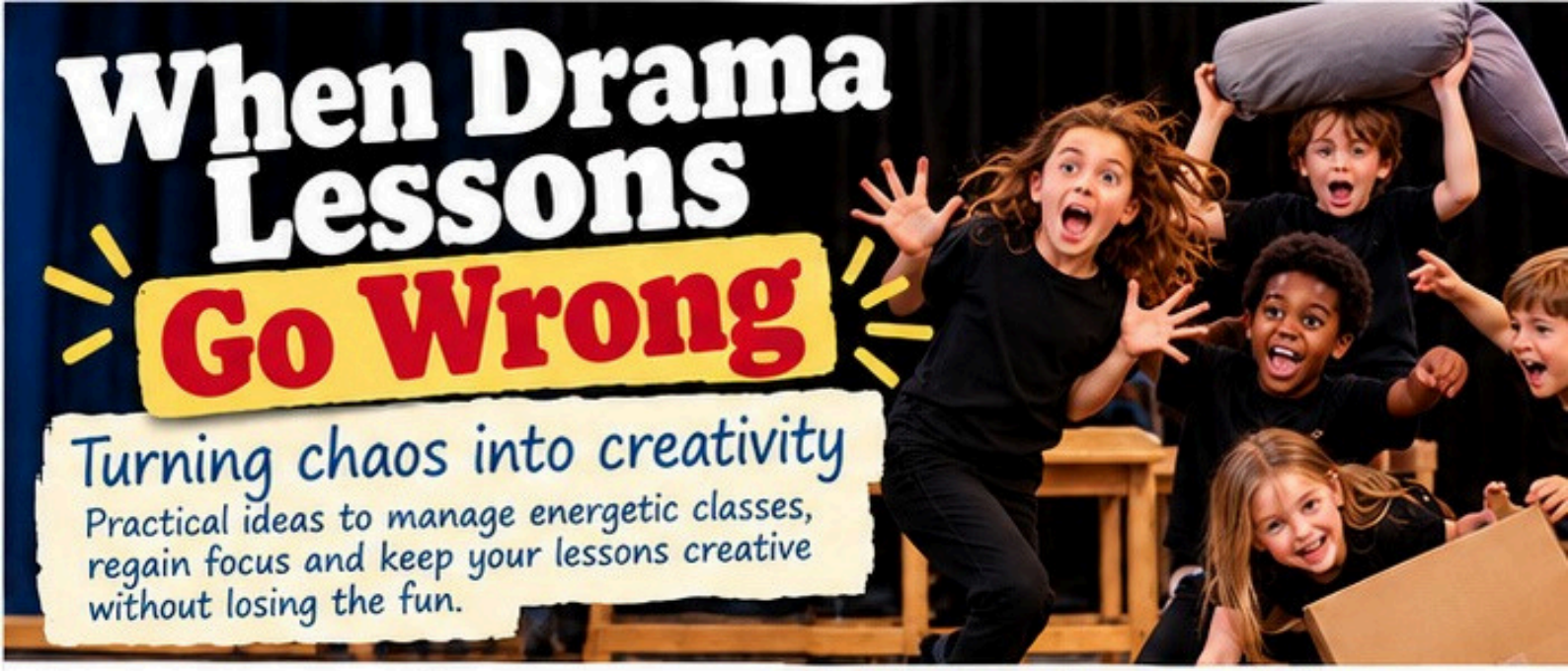
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When Drama Lessons Go Wrong



Turning chaos into creativity

Practical ideas to manage energetic classes, regain focus and keep your lessons creative without losing the fun.

Even the most experienced drama teachers know it – the lesson that doesn't go to plan. Students are noisy, distracted, off task or full of too much energy. It can be frustrating, but it can also be an opportunity. Chaos often contains the seeds of creativity if we approach it with a clear plan, a positive mindset and a few tried and tested strategies.

Why drama lessons can get chaotic

Energy, excitement and imagination are part of drama. But sometimes they can tip into chaos. Common reasons include:

- Students are tired or distracted
- The activity is not engaging enough
- Instructions are not clear
- Groups are too large or unbalanced
- There is too much unstructured time
- Students are unsure of what is expected
- It is the end of the day (or week!)

The upside of chaos

A lively class is not always a problem. It often means students are comfortable, enthusiastic and willing to take risks. The challenge is to channel that energy productively so that creativity can thrive.



Quick strategies to regain focus

When a lesson starts to get out of control, try these simple techniques:

1. **Stop, reset and refocus** – Use a calm signal (a hand up, a clap pattern, or a phrase) to bring everyone back.
2. **Change the energy** – Switch to a different type of activity, for example from high energy to a focused stillness exercise.
3. **Be clear and concise** – Give short, simple instructions and check understanding.
4. **Give responsibility** – Put students in charge of a group, a prop or a task.
5. **Use a time limit** – A clear challenge with a deadline can refocus attention.
6. **Keep it positive** – Acknowledge good behaviour and effort.

Turning chaos into creativity

Sometimes the unexpected can lead to brilliant ideas. If students are full of energy, try using it as part of the lesson.

Ideas to try

- Use the chaos as a starting point for a scene. Ask, "What just happened?"
- Create a tableau of the moment when everything went wrong.
- Ask students to invent a character who might be causing the chaos.
- Turn it into a freeze-frame story, then let the scenes unfold.
- Use the energy for a physical theatre exercise or movement sequence.



Making Theatre on a Shoestring

How to create exciting performances with minimal props, simple costumes, limited space and little or no budget.



Great theatre does not have to be expensive. With imagination, creativity and a few simple resources, you can create exciting, memorable productions that inspire your students and engage your audience. Working with limited budgets can actually encourage more inventive solutions and give students the chance to take ownership of the creative process.

Why a small budget can be a big advantage

When resources are limited, students learn to think creatively, solve problems and work as a team. They discover that theatre is not about fancy sets or expensive costumes, but about storytelling, imagination and human connection.

Benefits for students

- Encourages creativity and resourcefulness
- Builds confidence and teamwork
- Develops problem-solving skills
- Teaches the value of collaboration
- Focuses on performance skills rather than material things



> "Imagination is the most powerful set we can build."

Simple staging ideas

You do not need a full set to create a believable world. Here are some effective staging ideas:

- Use chairs, boxes or benches to suggest different locations
- Create levels with sturdy crates or platforms
- Use fabric to define different spaces
- Keep the stage open and let the actors' imagination do the rest
- Use lighting (even simple lamps) to change the mood and location



Low-cost props

Everyday items can be transformed into effective props. Look around your home, school or local community.

Ideas for low-cost props

- Cardboard boxes – furniture, vehicles, buildings
- Plastic bottles – potions, microphones, torches
- Old suitcases – travel, storage, treasure
- Umbrellas – trees, magic items, protection
- Sticks and tubes – weapons, walking sticks, flag poles
- Kitchen items – bowls, spoons, trays
- Newspapers – maps, scrolls, disguises



Creative costumes

You can create effective costumes without expensive fabrics or professional materials.

Costume ideas

- Use clothes from home, charity shops or school uniform
- Add simple accessories like hats, scarves, belts or jewellery
- Use fabric, bin bags or paper to create capes, cloaks or skirts
- Raid the dressing-up box for inspiration
- Let students help design and make their own costume elements



Using space creatively

Even a small space can work well. Think about:

- Audience on three sides (thrust stage)
- Performing in the round
- Using corridors, classrooms or outdoor spaces
- Moving the audience to different locations
- Keeping the action simple and focused

Top tips for success

- ✔ Focus on strong storytelling
- ✔ Use students' ideas
- ✔ Keep it simple
- ✔ Be flexible and open to changes
- ✔ Celebrate creativity, not perfection
- ✔ Remember that energy and commitment can be more powerful than expensive sets or costumes
- ✔ Most importantly – have fun!

Final thought

Theatre is not about how much money you spend, but about the imagination, passion and people you have on stage. With a little creativity and a spirit of teamwork, you can create something truly special – and your students will remember it for all the right reasons.





New Era Examinations

NEA are excited to launch their innovative Podcasting Syllabus!
Podcasting is currently one of the most popular forms of communicating, news, information or entertainment!
NEA's Podcasting syllabus is designed to give learners a structured, progressive and practical introduction to podcast creation, self-presentation, research, recording and reflective practice.
The syllabus recognises podcasting as a contemporary communication form that combines performance, storytelling, media literacy, technical awareness and audience engagement.
Through this syllabus, learners are encouraged to develop confidence in front of the camera, communicate ideas clearly, and understand how content is shaped for different purposes, audiences and genres.
The syllabus places equal importance on creative expression and technical competence.
Learners are expected to present original and authentic work while also demonstrating awareness of framing, lighting, sound, camera angles, editing, formatting and appropriate use of music or transitions.
This balance ensures that podcasting is understood not only as spoken communication, but also as a planned and edited screen-based media product.
Reflection is embedded throughout the syllabus grades to help learners evaluate both their performance and their production process. By considering what worked well, what was challenging and what could be improved, learners develop critical awareness and take increasing responsibility for the quality of their own work.
We hope that you and your students enjoy exploring and trying out this new relevant, challenging discipline alongside our other varied communication and performance disciplines.
Please view our new podcasting syllabus on our website: https://neweraacademy.co.uk/index.php/podcasting/
For further information or support please contact our Office Team who will be happy to help you:
Email: exams@neweraacademy.co.uk
Phone: +44 (330)133 1885

Someone Saw Something

The people who make a difference are not always looking for talent.





There is a phrase we use a lot in the performing arts.

Talent.

We talk about spotting talent, developing talent, nurturing talent.

But looking back at my own life, I'm not sure that the people who had the biggest influence on me were necessarily looking for "talent" in the conventional sense.

I think they were looking for something else.

Curiosity, perhaps.

Enthusiasm.

A willingness to have a go.

Or maybe just that little spark which says: there might be something here if we give it some room.

That certainly feels true of one of the first teachers who really made a difference to me.

His name was David Wood.

By the time I reached secondary school I was still very much an art-room person. Drawing and painting were where I naturally went. I would spend as much time in the art room as I could, and David was the art teacher.

But he was much more than that.

He was involved in the school productions too, and suddenly the different parts of my creative life began bumping into one another.

There was art.

There was drama.

There was musical theatre.

There were school shows.

And there was somebody saying, in effect:

Go on then. Have a go.

That was David's particular gift.

He didn't make a great performance out of encouraging you.

There weren't endless speeches about believing in yourself or fulfilling your potential.

He simply created opportunities and put people into them.

Sometimes that is all somebody needs.

I think we can become slightly obsessed with trying to identify exactly what a young person is going to become.

Is this child a dancer?

Is she an actor?

Is he a singer?

Is this one destined for musical theatre?

But at that age, why on earth should they know?

I certainly didn't.

I was a painfully shy boy who loved drawing.

Then I discovered I quite liked drama.

Then I realised that performing could actually be enjoyable.

Then somebody gave me another opportunity.

And another.

None of it felt like some grand career strategy.

It was just one door opening onto another.

David was very good at that.

He challenged you, but somehow he did it without making the challenge feel frightening.

You suddenly found yourself doing something you perhaps hadn't imagined yourself doing — and once you had done it, the world became slightly bigger.

That is a remarkable thing for a teacher to give somebody.

Because confidence doesn't always arrive first.

Sometimes the opportunity arrives first, and confidence catches up afterwards.

I think that distinction is really important.

We often wait for children to appear confident before giving them responsibility or putting them forward.

But what if the confidence only develops because somebody gave them the chance in the first place?

That was certainly part of my experience.

I began doing more drama and more performance.

There were poetry readings.

There were school productions.

Then the world outside school began opening as well.

I became involved with youth theatre and amateur dramatic companies and started appearing in the sort of big traditional musicals that were enormously popular around Yorkshire at the time.

West Side Story.

My Fair Lady.

South Pacific.

Wonderful shows.

And wonderful training, although I didn't think of it as training at the time.

Part Two

A teacher's encouragement can open a lifetime of possibilities.





You learned by being in the room.

You watched people.

You listened.

You learned where to stand.

You learned what happened if you missed an entrance.

You learned very quickly that there were other people on stage with you and that the whole thing didn't revolve around you.

That in itself is a useful lesson for life.

And gradually this shy boy who had spent so much time expressing himself privately through drawing was discovering another way of communicating.

But I was also discovering people.

That mattered enormously.

One of the things I remember about those early experiences was finding other young people who perhaps didn't quite fit the obvious mould either.

The performing arts give people permission to be different.

They bring together the loud ones, the quiet ones, the eccentric ones, the serious ones, the funny ones and the ones still trying to work out who on earth they are.

Somehow you make something together.

For somebody who had been shy and insecure, that sense of belonging was incredibly important.

And again, that brings me back to teachers.

A performing arts teacher may believe they are teaching acting, singing or dance.

Of course they are.

But something else is going on in that room too.

They are creating a community.

They are giving young people a place where being expressive is normal.

Where being different can actually be useful.

Where sensitivity isn't necessarily a weakness.

Where imagination has some value.

I don't underestimate what that can mean to a young person.

David went on to have his own fascinating creative life, writing plays and becoming involved in theatre professionally.

Years later I visited the small Yorkshire theatre where he became artistic director.

By then I had gone off into my own professional life and our paths had moved in different directions, but I never forgot what he had done for me.

Not because he told me what I should become.

Quite the opposite.

He gave me enough freedom to begin finding it out for myself.

And perhaps that is one of the greatest gifts any teacher can give.

Because young people surprise us.

The child who looks like the obvious star at twelve may decide at eighteen that they want nothing whatsoever to do with a stage.

The shy child at the back of the room may eventually spend a lifetime in the performing arts.

The dancer may become a choreographer.

The performer may become a director.

The actor may become a teacher.

And the child drawing quietly in the art room may somehow end up doing all sorts of things nobody — least of all the child — could possibly have predicted.

A teacher doesn't always need to know where the journey ends.

Sometimes they just need to recognise that a journey has begun.

Give somebody a chance.

Challenge them a little.

Let them surprise themselves.

Then, perhaps, get out of the way and see where they go.

I was lucky enough to have somebody do that for me.

And somewhere along the way, without really noticing it happening, the shy boy who liked drawing was beginning to think:

Maybe I could do this.