

The terrible fate of Humpty Dumpty - Introduction to Script

By the end of this topic, students will be able to know how to adapt a scene from a play using improvisation and rehearsal techniques to present context and character in keeping with a playwrights intention

Communicating Context

WHO are the characters?

WHERE is the scene set?

WHEN is the scene set?

WHAT is the action?

WHY is it happening?

Conventions of a play text

Character list – a list of names and brief descriptions often referred to as dramatis personæ

Scene title – usually the setting, a theme or even just a number

Stage Directions – descriptions of action placed in brackets during dialogue or in italics elsewhere

Character Names – written in the left hand margin, often in capitals or before a colon

Dialogue – speech between characters

Monologue – what is spoken to the audience either as a soliloquy, direct address or an aside

Scene – a moment of continuous action

Act – a grouping of scenes within a play

Intermission – a break in the performance often referred to as an interval

Rehearsal Terminology

Cues / Blocking – the order of dialogue and / or action on stage

Lines – what is spoken on stage

Improvisation – action / lines that are discovered by the actor

Dress Rehearsal – an uninterrupted rehearsal as if it were the performance

Off-text improvisation – a devised performance in character but not in the play

Use of space – Picturisation

Proxemics - the meaning behind the distance between characters

Levels – placing characters at different heights

Formation – the shapes made by more than one person in the space

Characterisation

Posture – body position to communicate mood or attitude

Gesture – hand signals that communicate mood, attitude or intention

Facial Expression – facial signal to communicate mood

Vocal Dynamics – the sound of the voice communicating mood