

A level Drama and Theatre Glossary

This glossary has been provided to support the teaching and learning of this qualification. You might find this helpful to support students in developing their knowledge and understanding of subject specific terminology.

Performance

Term	Definition
acting area	that area within the performance space within which the actor may move in full view of the audience. Also known as the playing area
acting style	a particular manner of acting which reflects cultural and historical influences
action	the movement or development of the plot or story in a play; the sense of forward movement created by the sense of time and/or the physical and psychological motivations of characters.
analysis	in responding to dramatic art, the process of examining how the elements of drama—literary, technical, and performance—are used
antagonist	the opponent or adversary of the hero or main character of a drama; one who opposes and actively competes with another character in a play, most often with the protagonist
apron	the area between the front curtain and the edge of the stage.
arena stage	type of stage without a frame or arch separating the stage from the auditorium, in which the audience surrounds the stage area; see theatre-in-the-round.
articulation	the clarity or distinction of speech
aside	Lines spoken by an actor to the audience and not supposed to be overheard by other characters on-stage.
black box	a one-room theatre, without a proscenium arch; interior is painted black, including walls, floor, and ceiling, and any drapes are also black.
blocking	the path formed by the actor's movement on stage, usually determined by the director with assistance from the actor and often written down in a script using commonly accepted theatrical symbols.
business	a piece of unscripted or improvised action, often comic in intention, used to establish a character, fill a pause in dialogue, or to establish a scene. An author may simply suggest 'business' to indicate the need for some action at that point in the play.
catharsis	the feeling of release felt by the audience at the end of a tragedy; the audience experiences catharsis, or is set free from the emotional hold of the action, after experiencing strong emotions and sharing in the protagonist's troubles.
character	a person portrayed in a drama, novel, or other artistic piece.
characterisation	how an actor uses body, voice, and thought to develop and portray

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Term	Definition
	a character.
choreography	the movement of actors and dancers to music in a play.
chorus	a group of performers who sing, dance, or recite in unison; in Greek drama, the chorus was the group of performers who sang and danced between episodes, narrated off-stage action, and commented on events.
climax	the point of greatest intensity in a series or progression of events in a play, often forming the turning point of the plot and leading to some kind of resolution.
comedy	a play that treats characters and situations in a humorous way. In Shakespeare's time, a comedy was any play with a happy ending that typically told the story of a likable character's rise to fortune. In ancient Greece, comedies dealt almost exclusively with contemporary figures and problems. Low comedy is physical rather than intellectual comedy; high comedy is more sophisticated, emphasizing verbal with more than physical action.
comic relief	a break in the tension of a tragedy provided by a comic character, a comic episode, or even a comic line.
concentration	the actor's focus, also called centering; focusing on the work at hand, being in character, or being in the moment.
conflict	the internal or external struggle between opposing forces, ideas, or interests that creates dramatic tension.
contrast	dynamic use of opposites, such as movement/stillness, sound/silence, and light/darkness.
dénouement	The moment in a drama when the essential plot point is unravelled or explained.
development	progression of the plot or conflict in a play.
dialogue	spoken conversation used by two or more characters to express thoughts, feelings, and actions.
dynamic	the energetic range of or variations within physical movement or the difference between levels of sound
end on	Traditional audience seating layout where the audience is looking at the stage from the same direction. This seating layout is that of a Proscenium Arch theatre. See also THRUST, IN THE ROUND, TRAVERSE.
ensemble	the dynamic interaction and harmonious blending of the efforts of the many artists involved in the dramatic activity of theatrical production.
exposition	the part of a play that introduces the theme, chief characters, and current circumstances.
farce	an extreme form of comedy that depends on quick tempo and flawless timing and is characterized by improbable events and farfetched coincidences; from the French meaning "to stuff."
flashback	in a non-linear plot, to go back in time to a previous event; a <i>flash</i>

Term	Definition
	<i>forward</i> would move the action into the future.
focus	in acting, the act of concentrating or staying in character.
fourth wall	the invisible wall of a set through which the audience sees the action of the play.
genre	a category of literary or dramatic composition; drama is a literary genre. Drama is further divided into tragedy, comedy, farce, and melodrama, and these genres, in turn, can be subdivided.
gesture	any movement of the actor's head, shoulder, arm, hand, leg, or foot to convey meaning.
imaging	a technique which allows performers to slow down and focus individually on an issue. The performers, sitting quietly with eyes closed, allow pictures to form in their minds. These images may be motivated by bits of narration, music, sounds, smells, etc.
improvisation	the spontaneous use of movement and speech to create a character or object in a particular situation; acting done without a script.
inflection	change in pitch or loudness of the voice.
interaction	the action or relationship among two or more characters.
irony	an implied discrepancy between what is said and what is meant. There are several forms of irony. <i>Verbal irony</i> is when a writer or speaker says one thing and means something else (often the opposite of what is said). When the audience perceives something that a character does not know, that is <i>dramatic irony</i> . <i>Situational irony</i> can be described as a discrepancy between expected results and the actual results.
isolation	control of isolated body parts; the ability to control or move one part of the body independently of the rest.
kinaesthetic	resulting from the sensation of bodily position, presence, or movement.
language	in drama, the particular manner of verbal expression, the diction or style of writing, or the speech or phrasing that suggests a class or profession or type of character.
mannerism	a peculiarity of speech or behaviour.
melodrama	a style of play, which originated in the 19th century, relying heavily on sensationalism and sentimentality. Melodramas tend to feature action more than motivation, stock characters, and a strict view of morality in which good triumphs over evil.
mime	acting without words.
mirroring	copying the movement and/or expression or look of someone else exactly.
monologue	a long speech made by one actor; a monologue may be delivered alone or in the presence of others.
mood	the tone or feeling of the play, often engendered by the music,

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Term	Definition
	setting, or lighting.
motivation	the reason or reasons for a character's behaviour; an incentive or inducement for further action for a character.
movement	stage blocking or the movements of the actors onstage during performance; also refers to the action of the play as it moves from event to event.
naturalism	a style of drama that developed in the late 19th century as an attempt to represent real life on stage faithfully and without artifice; the actions of characters tend to be dominated by determinism (societal or environmental forces).
pace	rate of movement or speed of action
parody	a mocking or satirical imitation of a literary or dramatic work.
performance elements	include acting (e.g., character motivation and analysis, empathy), speaking (breath control, vocal expression and inflection, projection, speaking style, diction), and nonverbal expression (gestures, body alignment, facial expression, character blocking, movement).
pitch	the particular level of a voice, instrument or tune.
plot	the events of a play or arrangement of action, as opposed to the theme.
plot development	the organization or building of the action in a play.
posture	Physical alignment of a performer's body or a physical stance taken by a performer which conveys information about the character being played
projection	how well the voice carries to the audience.
prompt	to give actors their lines as a reminder; the <i>prompter</i> is the one who assists actors in remembering their lines.
Proscenium	a frame or arch separating the stage from the auditorium. The proscenium opening was of particular importance to the Realistic playwrights of the 19th century, such as Ibsen and Shaw, for whom it was a picture frame or an imaginary fourth wall through which the audience experienced the illusion of spying on characters.
protagonist	the main character or hero in a play or other literary work.
proxemics	contemporary term for 'spatial relationships', referring to spatial signifiers of the relationship between different performers or a performer and elements of the set which convey information about character and circumstances.
realism	an attempt in theatre to represent everyday life and people as they are or appear to be through careful attention to detail in character motivation, costume, setting, and dialogue. Plays from this period (from 1820 to 1920) seek the truth, find beauty in the commonplace, and focus on the conditions of the working class. Henrik Ibsen is an exemplar of the movement; he influenced others such as George Bernard Shaw and Anton Chekov.

Term	Definition
resolution	how the problem or conflict in a drama is solved or concluded.
rhythm	measured flow of words or phrases in verse forming patterns of sound. Regularity in time or space of an action, process or feature.
ritual	a prescribed form or ceremony; drama grew out of religious ritual.
role	the character portrayed by an actor in a drama.
role playing	improvising movement and dialogue to put oneself in another's place in a particular situation, often to examine the person(s) and/or situation(s) being improvised.
satire	a play in which sarcasm, irony, and ridicule are used to expose or attack folly or pretension in society.
scene	a small section or portion of a play.
scenography	the art of creating performance environments using one or more components including light, costume, set, space and sound.
set	the physical surroundings, visible to the audience, in which the action of the play takes place.
setting	when and where the action of a play takes place.
sightlines	imaginary lines of sight that determine what areas of the stage are visible to the audience from any given seat in the house.
soliloquy	a speech in which an actor, usually alone on stage, speaks the inner thoughts of his/her character aloud.
sound	the effects an audience hears during a performance to communicate character, context, or environment.
sound elements	music, sound effects, actors' voices.
space	a defined area
spatial awareness	traditional term for what is currently referred to as ' proxemics ', referring to spatial signifiers of the relationship between different performers or a performer and elements of the set which convey information about character and circumstances.
stage presence	the level of comfort, commitment, and energy an actor appears to have on stage.
staging	another term for blocking; deliberate choices about where the actors stand and how they move on stage to communicate character relationships and plot and to create interesting stage pictures in relation to set, properties and audience and effects created by lighting, for example.
stock characters	characters who represent particular personality types or characteristics of human behaviour. Stock characters are immediately recognizable and appear throughout the history of theatre, beginning with Greek and Roman comedy and elaborated upon in <i>commedia dell' arte</i> .
story line	the plot or plan of action.
structure	The arrangement of and relationship between the constituent parts

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Term	Definition
	of a whole as in 'prologue, exposition, denouement' or scenes and acts within a play.
stylisation	the shaping of dramatic material, settings, or costumes in a deliberately non-realistic manner.
suspense	a feeling of uncertainty as to the outcome, used to build interest and excitement on the part of the audience.
symbolism	the use of symbolic language, imagery, or colour to evoke emotions or ideas.
tableau	a technique in creative drama in which actors create a frozen picture, as if the action were paused; plural is <i>tableaux</i> . Not to be confused with <i>freeze frame</i> , which is a term used in film and video production and which should not be used when discussing drama.
tempo	relative speed or rate of movement in pace over time, e.g. the speed at which the music for a dance should be played. Can be applied to dramatic contexts such as in 'tempo rhythm'.
tension	the atmosphere created by unresolved, disquieting, or inharmonious situations that human beings feel compelled to address; the state of anxiety the audience feels because of a threat to a character in a play.
text	the basis of dramatic activity and performance; a written script or an agreed-upon structure and content for an improvisation.
theatre games	improvisational exercises structured by the director or teacher to achieve a specific objective, such as breaking down inhibitions or establishing trust.
theatre-in-the-round:	an acting area or stage that may be viewed from all sides simultaneously.
theme	the basic idea of a play; the idea, point of view, or perception that binds together a work of art.
thrust	a stage that extends into the audience area, with seats on three sides of a peninsula-shaped acting space.
timbre	The distinctive character or quality of a musical or vocal sound apart from its pitch or intensity such as in a nasal voice quality.
timing	includes setting cues for effects and lighting, synchronizing two or more things that must happen simultaneously, and establishing the pace at which lines will be delivered or the play performed.
traverse	form of staging where the audience is on either side of the acting area. See also IN THE ROUND, END ON, THRUST.
turning point:	the climax or high point of a story, when events can go either way.
upstage: (verb)	to deliberately draw the audience's attention away from another actor or actors by overacting, using flashy bits of business, or other means; term originated from an actor purposefully positioning himself upstage of the other actors so that they must turn their backs on the audience to deliver their lines to him.
vocal expression	how an actor uses his or her voice to convey character

Term	Definition
vocal projection	directing the voice out of the body to be heard clearly at a distance.
voice	the combination of vocal qualities an actor uses such as articulation, phrasing, and pronunciation.
wings	offstage areas to the right and left of the acting/onstage area.

Costume Design

Term	Definition
accessories	anything carried or worn on top of the basic costume for decorative purposes, e.g. a purse or shawl
basic block	a pattern which is the starting block for a more detailed pattern based on a particular actor's measurements, and reflecting specifics like historical period
basting	sewing fabric pieces together with long or loose temporary stitches
breaking down	artistic process of aging or distressing a costume. Paint, glue, dye, ripping and tearing can be used in this process.
costume	what an actor wears to evoke the appearance of a particular character. Costumes may be realistic or stylised. They may be "period"—appropriate to the historical setting of the play—or deliberately modern in look, even when the play is set in a past era.
costume build	the process of constructing the costume
costume fitting	first meeting between the actor and his/her costume. Enables wardrobe staff to ensure a correct fit, and to enable the actor to see if all necessary movement is possible.
costume parade (or dress parade)	costume check on stage
costume plot	a list or chart made by the costume designer showing the characters appearing in each scene, and what they are wearing. This helps track each character's whereabouts throughout the performance.
cutter	skilled wardrobe craftsman who creates the patterns and is responsible for the construction of the female costumes. The cutter's tools include craft paper, T square and fashion ruler.
draping	creating a pattern by draping muslin on a dress form, pinning and tucking to get the desired shape, and transferring that shape to craft paper.
dresser	crew member who aids with dressing
dress form	the adjustable torso (male and female) used by costume cutters, dressmakers and tailors for creating garments; useful for: creating shapes from which patterns are made (draping), fitting and detailed in-place sewing.
dress rehearsal	dress full costume/lighting/effects/sound/ action rehearsal
dressing rooms	rooms containing clothes rails and mirrors (often surrounded with lights) in which actors change into their costumes and apply make-up. Dressing Room doors have a list of the actors contained within. See also GREEN ROOM.
First Hand	an assistant to a cutter or tailor who may sew the costume together, assist at fittings, supervise the sewing team and do the finishing details on a costume.

Term	Definition
 fittings 	the process of adjusting the costume to the actor's body.
 flat drafting 	the use of a basic block and cutter's tools to draft a pattern on craft paper.
 gondola 	an enclosed easily transportable costume rail with removable side which enables large shows to manage huge quantities of costumes, wigs etc. easily.
 hand 	the way a particular fabric feels when it is touched; it may have a soft hand, or a crisp hand, etc.
 Head of wardrobe 	person in charge of the wardrobe and responsible for budgeting, supplies, staff allocation.
 maquette 	a model of the set or costume sketch intended for use by the builder as a guide to construction.
 mock-up 	a full-scale model of a costume, used as a test-run.
 muslin 	a simply woven cotton fabric used to make the costume mock-up, also called factory cotton or unbleached cotton
 pancake 	water based stage make up, applied with sponge
 preliminaries 	the costume designer's first rough drawings which are assessed for feasibility and affordability
 personal props 	small props that are usually carried in an actor's costume, such as money or a pen
 props 	abb. for Properties. Any items used onstage which are not costume or scenery; any moveable object that appears on stage during a performance.
 quick change 	a change of costume that needs to happen very quickly takes place close to the side of the stage. Costume designers need to know about the need for a quick change so that the costume is made incorporating elements such as velcro and zips rather than buttons. A quick change room is often erected at the side of the stage to enable changes to take place in privacy.
 quick change room 	area adjacent to the stage containing lighting, a mirror and a costume rail in which actors can make costume changes quickly, sometimes with the aid of a dresser.
 seamstress 	member of the wardrobe department who operates sewing machines and carries out other sewing tasks.
 silhouette 	a figure whose outline indicates the shape of clothing in a particular historical period.
 stock 	costumes stored from previous productions for recycling and re-use.
 swatch 	a sample of fabric to demonstrate the material to use on a costume or set design, or a sample of lighting gel. A catalogue of all the gel colours made by a particular manufacturer is called a SWATCH BOOK.
 T-square 	ruler, with perpendicular crosspiece at one end (it looks like the

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Term	Definition
	letter "T"), used for establishing and drawing parallel lines.
tailor	an expert in building clothing for men: historic costumes, military costumes and formal wear. A tailor would create the patterns for jackets, trousers and shirts using the actor's body measurements.
unpick	small cutter designed for unpicking a sewn seam. Useful for undoing alterations to a costume following a production.
wardrobe	the general name for the costume department, its staff and the accommodation they occupy.
wardrobe maintenance	washing and repair of costume
wardrobe plot	actor-by-actor, scene-by-scene inventory of all the costumes in a production, with a detailed breakdown into every separate item in each costume.
working drawings	drawings made in addition to designers

Lighting Design

Term	Definition
advance Bar	lighting bar hung from auditorium close to stage
amp	abb. amplifier used to amplify sound
AMP	abb. Ampere, a unit of electrical current
baby Spot	small spotlight under 500w
backlight	light coming from upstage, behind scenery or actors, to sculpt and separate them from the background
back projection	a method of projecting images onto a translucent screen from behind. Often used for projected scenery or special effects. Because the projector is usually close to the screen, special lenses are needed to ensure that the image seen by the audience is large enough.
bar	metal tube used for hanging lanterns
barn-door	a rotatable attachment consisting of two or four metal flaps (hinged) which is fixed to the front of a Fresnel or PC type lantern to cut off the beam in a particular direction(s). Profile lanterns use SHUTTERS to achieve a greater degree of control and accuracy.
battens	compartmentalised floodlights set up so as to allow colour mixing. See also GROUNDROW. Low voltage battens are commonly used as light curtains & for colour washes. Known in the US as a Strip light.
beam Light	lantern with no lens but with parabolic reflector
bifocal spot	profile lantern with two sets of shutters, one of which produces a hard edge, and one a soft edge. Not necessary in zoom profiles, because this requirement is fulfilled by two lenses.
blackout	a lighting cue where all stage lights go off simultaneously.

Term	Definition
board	abb. for "lighting control board"
build	increase light levels
bulb round	lighting check
channel	connected circuit in lighting system
check	decrease light levels
cinemoid	type of colour gel
circuit	means by which a lantern can be identified and connected to a dimmer
clamp	normally used to attach lanterns to bars
colour call	list of gels for a design
colour filter	a sheet of plastic usually composed of a coloured resin sandwiched between two clear pieces. The coloured filter absorbs all the colours of light except the colour of the filter itself, which it allows through. A colour filter is sometimes known as a Gel, after the animal material Gelatine, from which filters were originally made.
colour mixing	combining the effects of two or more lighting gels.
control room	where lighting is controlled from
cross-fade	bringing another lighting state up to completely replace the current lighting state. Sometimes abbreviated to Xfade or XF.
cue lights	system of lights used to give "Cues".
cue sheet	list of effects
diffusion gel	also called Frost. Softens light
dimmer	device that controls electricity passed to lanterns
downlight	a light from directly above the acting area.
dress rehearsal	full costume/lighting/effects/sound/ action rehearsal
electrician	(Chief, Deputy, Assistant) responsible for lighting
elex	'LX' electrical things or electrical department
elex tape	"LX" tape sticky back plastic tape available in various colours
ellipsoidal	type of reflector used in profile spots
engineer	usually "sound" but can be "lighting"
fader	means of controlling lights
flash	when lights are flashed for effect
flash up	method of testing lanterns
floats	jargon for footlights
flood	to wash the stage with general lighting. The name given to a basic box-shaped lantern with a simple reflector used to achieve this effect.

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Term	Definition
focus	The adjustment of lighting/projection equipment and/or the direction in which it is aimed
focusing session	when adjustment and plotting is done
follow spot	large profile spotlight with operator
fresnel	adjustable spotlight giving a diffused light, created by the construction of its lens of 'concentric circles'. Used with barn doors.
FX	abb. for 'effects'
gel	coloured lighting film (originally made from gelatine)
gobo	metal slide placed in gate of lantern which throws a pattern
groundrow	floodlight battens placed on stage
halogen	gas contained in lamps
heads below	warning shouted if anything is dropped from above
house lights	the lights that illuminate the auditorium before and after the performance and during intermission.
impedance	term of electrical resistance
iris	device in lantern gate that allows beam size to be altered
kill	instruction to stop action or effect
lamps	the thing that creates light in a lantern ("bulb" in domestic terms)
lantern	stage light
level	intensity of light
lighting plot	lighting cue description
light set	a term used to describe a situation where no physical set is used on stage. The 'set' is created entirely by means of lighting.
lose	to turn something off
limes	old term for Follow Spots
mains	power source
master	lever/slide which controls all light
multicore	thick cable containing many cables
PC – prism convex	or "pebble". A lens in a lantern
par can	type of lantern containing a fixed beam par lamp
patch panel	panel where lighting circuits are connected and changed – 'patched'
perch	lighting position concealed behind proscenium
profile spot	lantern which can produce hard or soft light
plot	any list of cues
prompt copy/book	the master copy of the performance, including all blocking, effects and cues

Term	Definition
record	plotting a lighting cue by saving it to the lighting board
reflector	shiny surface in back of lantern which helps throw light
rigging	fixing lighting, sound and scenic devices to the theatre structure
saturation rig	lighting rig at full capacity
scatter	low level light cast at side of normal light beam
shin buster	low side lights
shutter	device in lantern used to shape beam
slots	side lighting position in auditorium walls
special effects	lighting effects used to enhance a theatrical performance.
spill	unwanted light on the stage
strobe	flashing light
tech	Technical Rehearsal
throw	distance between lantern and object
tripe	thick bundle of cables from lighting bar
tri-lite	lighting/scenic metal section made from three lengths of lightweight alloy (triangular construction)
UV	abb. Ultra Violet
working lights	lights used by stage crew to aid work

Set Design

Term	Definition
act drop	cloth flown in at the end of an act
backcloth	flown cloth behind scenic element
back projection	a method of projecting images onto a translucent screen from behind. Often used for projected scenery or special effects. Because the projector is usually close to the screen, special lenses are needed to ensure that the image seen by the audience is large enough.
bar	metal tube used for hanging scenery
batten	length of wood attached to cloth to keep it taut
book flat	a hinged flat
border	flown scenic element used in masking
box set	a set with three walls and a ceiling, leaving the fourth wall to be imagined by the actors. The box set represents a real room with doors and windows that work.
brace	portable support for flats
breaking down	artistic process of aging costume, props or scenery.

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Term	Definition
butterfly tabs	tabs fixed at top and drawn in from sides
carpenter	(Scenic, Deputy, Master): maker of scenery
centre line	imaginary line shown on ground-plan
cleat	metal device used for tying sash lines
cloth	a piece of scenic canvas, painted or plain, which is flown or fixed to hang in a vertical position. A Backcloth (or Backdrop) hangs at the rear of a scene. A Floorcloth is a painted canvas sheet placed on the stage floor to mark out the acting area, or to achieve a particular effect. A Frontcloth hangs well downstage, often to hide a scene change taking place behind.
come down	when the curtains come down
counterweights	system used for lowering and raising scenery
curtains	at front of stage - called Tabs
curtain up/down	beginning and end of performance
cut cloth	scenic piece with no centre
cyclorama	a fabric drop hung from a curved or segmented batten, or a curved wall at the back of the stage, upon which light can be cast to create effects (<i>cyc</i> for short).
dead	marked position of scenery or equipment
dock	area at side/rear of stage for storing scenery
dress rehearsal	dress full costume/lighting/effects/sound/ action rehearsal
effect	scenic
elevation	technical drawing showing side view
EMU	electrical Multiple Unit, used to describe stage machinery composed from multiple moving parts
false pros'	decorative proscenium arch
fit up	installation of equipment and scenery
flat	a wooden frame, usually covered with painted cloth, used to create walls or separations on stage.
flies	area above stage where flown scenery is kept
floor-cloth	painted canvas flooring
footing	to steady a ladder/flat with your foot
flown	scenery or equipment which has been "flown" into the flies
fly	raising scenery above audience sight level
flyman	crew member operating flying equipment
fly tower	structure above stage containing flying equipment
french flat	solid flat

Term	Definition
french brace	collapsible brace fixed to flat
gaffer tape	sticky back fabric tape
gauze	see 'Scrim'
genie trap	a mechanised trap where actor shoots through stage floor
get in	when a touring company installs a show
get out	when touring company uninstalls show
grave trap	body length trapdoor in stage
grid	metal frames in flying tower from which flying equipment is held (wooden in very old theatres)
ground-plan	technical drawing of stage
hand props	properties such as tools, weapons, or luggage that are carried on stage by an individual actor.
header	horizontal flying piece horizontal flying piece
heads below	warning shouted if anything is dropped from above
hemp	type of abrasive rope originally used in theatre for flying
hemp flying	traditional method of flying using 3 or 5 hemp ropes and no counter-weights
iron	fireproof metal curtain
ladder	framework in shape of ladder
leg	flown cloth or flat masking side of stage
light set	A term used to describe a situation where no physical set is used on stage. The 'set' is created entirely by means of lighting.
lose	to remove from set
maquette	a model of the set intended for use by the builder as a guide to construction.
mark it	instruction to record position of performer/object on stage
mark out	temporary objects/lines on rehearsal floor used to describe set/stage
mask	to hide from audience's sight
masking	flats/cloths used to Mask
model	model of stage design
model box	model of theatre in which stage design model is housed
milliput	type of modelling plastic used to create model figures and model scenery
out	piece of scenery that has been flown "Out"
platform	also referred to as a riser or rostrum it is a stationary, standard flat walking surface for actors to perform on. Typically, they are built to be assembled modularly. They are often used to provide varying levels, to make a show more visually interesting. They are also used

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Term	Definition
	to separate areas on stage, and as seating.
pin hinge	hinge jointed by removable pin
practical	a working object onstage, such as a door or window
preset	position of scenery and effects at start of performance and scene
props	abb. for Properties. Any items used onstage which are not costume or scenery; any moveable object that appears on stage during a performance.
prop box/skip	place to store props
prop table	table situated in wings on which props are placed
props room	room for construction of props
pyrotechnics	bombs, bangs, flashes etc.
rigging	fixing lighting, sound and scenic devices to the theatre structure
runner	used to hold down carpet edges
scenery	the theatrical equipment, such as curtains, flats, backdrops, or platforms, used in a dramatic production to communicate environment.
scenic artists	people who paint scenery
scrim (or gauze)	A drop made of fabric that seems almost opaque when lit from the front but semi-transparent when lit from behind.
set	the physical surroundings, visible to the audience, in which the action of the play takes place.
set designer	the person who designs the physical surroundings in which the action of the play takes place.
setting line	line past which no scenery, props or furniture may be set
size	glue like preparation made from animal bones, used to harden and preserve canvas on flats
spike	nail something to floor
stage brace	extending support for scenery
stage crew	employed to move/operate scenery
star trap	a mechanised trap where actor shoots through stage floor
strike	to remove object or scenery from stage
swag	curtains fashioned so they do not hang straight
tabs	curtains
teaser	short flown border
tech	technical rehearsal
treads	steps or stairs
tri-lite	lighting/scenic metal section made from three lengths of lightweight alloy (triangular construction)

Term	Definition
truck	platform with wheels
working drawings	drawings made in addition to designers

Sound Design

Term	Definition
amp	abb. amplifier used to amplify sound
AMP	abb. Ampere, a unit of electrical current
build	increase sound levels
cardioid	heart-shaped pick-up pattern of microphone
channel	connected circuit in sound system
check	decrease sound levels
condenser	type of microphone
control room	where lighting and sound is controlled from
cross-fade	in sound, bringing another sound state up to completely replace the current sound state/ change at which some channels are increased while other are lowered. Sometimes abbreviated to Xfade or XF.
crossover	sound system device that routes pitch to the correct part of the speaker
cue sheet	list of effects
decibel	dB. measurement of sound
desk	Sound Desk – sound operators desk
dub	reproduce sound from one copy to another
dynamic	type of microphone
elex	'LX' electrical things or electrical department
elex tape	"LX" tape sticky back plastic tape available in various colours
engineer	Sound engineer
E.Q.	abb. for equalisation
fader	means of controlling sound
feedback	when a mic picks up its own signal from a speaker
floatmic's	microphones placed along front of stage
foldback	sound sent to performer
frequency	number of times a sound vibrates
FX	abb. for 'effects'
gain	the "master" volume control on mixer

Glossary

horns	metal speakers
hypercardioid	type of pick-up pattern of a microphone
impedance	term of electrical resistance
kill	instruction to stop action or effect
lavalier	type of radio-mic fitting
level	intensity of sound
lose	to turn something off
mains	power source
master	lever/slide which controls all sound
mixer	desk/software for mixing sound
multicore	thick cable containing many cables
omnidirectional	pick up pattern of microphone
overture	music which starts a musical performance
PA system	the public address system or any sound system
PFL	“Pre Fade Listen” means of listening to a mic channel without bringing up the fader
pitch	the particular level of a voice, instrument or tune.
PZM	Pressure Zone Mic. Small plate collects reflections of sound into a small condenser mic
pan	to move sound from one place to another
plot	any list of cues
prompt copy/book	the master copy of the performance, including all blocking, effects and cues
radio mic	personal microphone without power lead
rigging	fixing lighting, sound and scenic devices to the theatre structure
sound	the effects an audience hears during a performance to communicate character, context, or environment.
sound design	the three categories of sound design, are: <i>Functional</i> (e.g. practical sounds such as a gunshot to coincide with an action on stage) <i>Atmospheric</i> (i.e. the possibility of using underscoring that may include music but which may also be in the form of a soundscape) <i>Incidental</i> where sound can be used to cover moments of transition (e.g. between scenes or to cover the placing of stage props).
sound effects	1) Recorded: Often abbreviated to FX. There are many sources for recorded sound effects, from Compact Discs, to downloading from the internet. May form an obvious part of the action (train arriving at station) or may be in the background throughout a scene (e.g. birds chirping). 2) Live: Gunshots, door slams, and offstage voices (amongst many others) are most effective when done live.

sound elements	music, sound effects, actors' voices.
special effects	sound effects used to enhance a theatrical performance.
tech	technical rehearsal
timbre	The distinctive character or quality of a musical or vocal sound apart from its pitch or intensity such as in a nasal voice quality.