

# Year 8 Drama – Physical Theatre



## Background Information

This year we will be extending our work on Physical Theatre by recapping key techniques and then looking specifically at the work of Bertolt Brecht, who is a key practitioner within the world of Physical Theatre.

Key terms and Skills	
<b>Body Propping</b>	Using our bodies to create props or objects that can be used within a scene.
<b>Synchronised Movements</b>	Two or more people performing the same movements at the same time.
<b>Chair Movement</b>	Inspired by Frantic Assembly. Use of movement on chairs and in and out of chairs that helps to tell a story.
<b>Choral Speaking</b>	Two or more people saying the same thing at the same time.
<b>Epic Theatre</b>	The type of Physical Theatre created by Bertolt Brecht using his political alienation techniques.
<b>Alienation</b>	Distancing the audience from the name of the character and allowing them to be seen as a stereotype
<b>Placards</b>	The use of signs and messages on stage to reinforce the messages of the performance
<b>Mime &amp; Gesture</b>	Use of specific movements (gestures) to help tell the story
<b>Conscience Alley</b>	A form of thought tracking where a character walks through the middle of other characters. The other characters all say something towards the character based on how the character thinks they feel about them.

## What tasks will I be completing?

- Exploring Bertolt Brecht techniques
- Learning about Brecht's background and upbringing
- Developing a Physical Theatre performance using these techniques
- Analysing professional examples

**Bertolt Brecht:** Bertolt Brecht was a **theatre practitioner**. He made and shaped theatre in a way that had a huge impact upon its development. Many of his ideas were so revolutionary that they changed the theatrical landscape forever. Modern theatre owes a lot to his methods.

When naturalistic theatre was at its height and acted as a mirror to what was happening in society, he decided to use it as a force for change. He wanted to make his audience think and famously said that theatre audiences at that time “hang up their brains with their hats in the cloakroom”.

He wanted his audiences to remain objective and distant from emotional involvement so that they could make considered and rational judgements about any social comment or issues in his work. To do this he used a range of theatrical devices or techniques so that the audience were reminded throughout that they were watching theatre; a presentation of life, **not** real life itself. His kind of theatre was called **Epic theatre**. He called the act of distancing the audience from emotional involvement the **verfremdungseffekt**.