

Drama – Understanding Scripts

What is The Terrible Fate of Humpty Dumpty about?

The Terrible Fate of Humpty Dumpty by David Calcutt is a powerful play that explores the serious issue of bullying in schools. It tells the story of a boy named Terry Dumpton, who is bullied after starting at a new school and given the cruel nickname "Humpty Dumpty." The play begins with the tragic ending—Terry dies after climbing an electrical pylon—and then uses flashbacks to show how bullying, peer pressure, fear, and silence all led to this moment. The story highlights how different people, including Terry's classmates, his friend Sammy, teachers, and his parents, all play a part in what happens—whether by their actions or by not doing enough to help. It makes the audience think about responsibility and the consequences of ignoring or allowing bullying to continue.

Stage Positionings

Stage positions are the names for different areas on the stage. They help actors know **where to stand or move** during a performance. These positions are always based on the **actor's point of view** (when they are facing the audience).

The main stage areas are:

- **Downstage**- which is the front of the stage closest to the audience.
- **Upstage**- which is the back of the stage, furthest from the audience
- **Centre stage**- which is right in the middle and often the main focus point.

We also use **stage left** and **stage right**, which are the actor's left and right when they are facing the audience. These can be combined with other areas to make more specific places on stage, like downstage left, centre right, or upstage centre.

UPSTAGE RIGHT	UPSTAGE CENTRE	UPSTAGE LEFT
STAGE RIGHT	CENTRE STAGE	STAGE LEFT
DOWNSTAGE RIGHT	DOWNSTAGE CENTRE	DOWNSTAGE LEFT



Key Vocabulary and Drama Techniques



Script

- The written text of a play.

Stage Directions

- **Stage directions** are the instructions in a script that tell actors how to move, speak, or react in a scene. They are there to help you show the right emotions and make sure the scene looks and feels the way the writer intended.

Flashback/Flashforward

- A **flashback** is a technique used that interrupts the chronological flow of the story to take the audience back to a previous time in a character's life. A **flashforward** is a technique used where the storyline jumps ahead to a future event.

Cyclical

- **Cyclical structure** means the play or story starts and ends in a similar way. This creates a sense of repetition, makes the message stronger, and shows that events may repeat if nothing changes.

Monologue

- One person delivering a speech to the audience

Duologue

- A role play between two people

Blocking

- Deciding where actors move and stand on the stage during a performance

Acting skills

- **Acting skills** are the techniques actors use to bring a character to life. This includes voice, body language and facial expressions.

Characterisation

- The way an actor uses their acting skills (voice, body language, facial expressions) to create a character.

Refine

- To improve a performance by making changes to acting skills or blocking to make it clearer and more effective.

