

Drama – Introduction to Drama

What is Matilda about?

Matilda is the story of a young girl with a brilliant mind and a love of books. Despite being ignored and mistreated by her unkind parents, Matilda discovers she has special powers and a strong sense of right and wrong. At school, she faces a terrifying headteacher, Miss Trunchbull, who rules with fear. But Matilda forms a close friendship with her kind and gentle teacher, Miss Honey, who helps her believe in herself.

Using her intelligence and bravery, Matilda stands up to the adults who try to control her, proving that even the smallest person can make a big difference.

Themes in *Matilda*

Courage – Standing up for what is right

Power and Control – Who has it, and how they use it

Education and Learning – Knowledge is a form of power

Kindness vs Cruelty – The contrast between Miss Honey and Miss Trunchbull

Justice – Getting what you deserve

Acting Skills explained

Voice

Your voice is one of the most powerful tools in acting. You can use it to show a character's emotions, status, or intentions.

Key things to consider:

- **Pitch** – How high or low your voice is
- **Pace** – How fast or slow you speak
- **Tone** – The feeling or emotion in your voice (e.g. angry, sad, excited)
- **Volume** – How loud or quiet your voice is

Body Language

This is how your body communicates without words. It helps the audience understand how your character is feeling or reacting.

Examples:

- Standing tall with crossed arms or fists clenched can show anger
- Hands on hip, with chin lifted can show confidence or control

Facial Expressions

Your face shows your character's emotions. Even small changes in your expression can say a lot to the audience.

Examples:

- A wide smile can show happiness
- Frowning or narrowed eyes can show confusion or anger
- Raised eyebrows can show surprise or shock

Key Vocabulary and Drama Techniques

Narration

- **Narration** is the act of telling a story. It is used to provide extra information to the audience about the situation or character.

Freeze Frame

- A 'frozen picture' that should communicate something clear to the audience. Big and exaggerated use of facial expressions and body language. Keep 100% still.

Thought Track

- When the characters say what they are thinking out loud whilst the other actors freeze. It is NOT a conversation with another character.

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.

Mime

- A series of movements actors use to tell the audience part of a story without speaking. Big and exaggerated facial expressions and body language must be used.

Audience Awareness

- Audience awareness means performing in a way that makes sure the audience can see, hear, and understand everything you do on stage. This includes facing the audience when speaking, using clear body language and facial expressions, and projecting your voice.

Vocal Expression

- Vocal expression in singing is how a singer uses tone, volume, and emotion in their voice to bring a song to life and connect with the audience

Choreography

- Choreography is the sequence of steps and movements in a dance.

