**Why Study Drama?**

**(Adapted from Australian Catholic University)**

**The Purpose of Drama**

Through drama you can become anyone, anywhere, at anytime. By understanding drama you can learn to understand anyone, anywhere anytime. Plays often capture the essence of a culture or a group within that culture. They reveal the attitudes and opinions of their day.

**Improvisation**

Drama gives us the opportunity to hone our Improvisation skills. Improvisation is the spontaneous response to new and unexpected situations. Life is improvisation. We respond in new ways when spontaneous and unexpected things occur to us.

**Play making**

In Drama you will be expected to create plays. Play making is the process of experimenting with new roles. Through plays we can re-examine old roles and challenge society’s values and interpretations.

**Drama As A Co-operative Process**

In Drama you will be asked to participate in group work. This will help you to explore relationships on and off stage. It will help your communication skills and it will help you to make friends on campus.

**Personal Benefits**

Studying Drama has a lot of personal benefits for students. It helps with building self-confidence, speaking in public, and developing interpersonal skills. Drama will help you to be more aware of how your physical presentation can effect the way people see you. Ethically, it provides the motivation to start to evaluate your own values and beliefs.

**Drama Influences our Lives**

Drama plays a major role in our lives. We all experience 'real life’ drama in the form of our own personal experiences as well as ‘real life’ drama in the news and current affairs. We are also exposed to fictional drama in film, on television, and in the theatre. By studying drama’s impact on our culture we can start to look more critically at what these media offer us and we can choose whether or not to accept the messages that they give. By studying Drama we become intelligent spectators who can distinguish between good and bad drama as well as ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ ideologies. We can start making informed decisions about the drama that we see.

**(From McGraw-Hill Online Learning Center)**

**Antagonist** - A character or force against which another character struggles.

**Aside** - Words spoken by an actor directly to the audience, which are not "heard" by the other characters on stage during a play.

**Characterization -** The means by which writers present and reveal character. Although techniques of characterization are complex, writers typically reveal characters through their speech, dress, manner, and actions.

**Climax -** The turning point of the action in the plot of a play or story. The climax represents the point of greatest tension in the work.

**Conflict** - A struggle between opposing forces in a story or play, usually resolved by the end of the work.

**Denouement** - The resolution of the plot of a literary work.

**Exposition -** The first stage of a fictional or dramatic plot, in which necessary background information is provided.

**Falling action -** In the plot of a story or play, the action following the climax of the work that moves it towards its denouement or resolution.

**Foil -** A character who contrasts and parallels the main character in a play or story.

**Foreshadowing -** Hints of what is to come in the action of a play or a story.

**Monologue -** A speech by a single character without another character's response.

**Protagonist -** The main character of a literary work.

**Rising action -** A set of conflicts and crises that constitute the part of a play's or story's plot leading up to the climax.

**Setting -** The time and place of a literary work that establish its context.

**Stage direction -** A playwright's descriptive or interpretive comments that provide readers (and actors) with information about the dialogue, setting, and action of a play.