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Plan for Success Membership: Component 2

Working Notebook Examples

Top Tips:

- When marking the work, also place ticks where you feel you are giving marks to the student.
- Use the language in the specification to guide you and help write your comments.
- Put a small summary at the end of the section, fully explaining why the student deserves the mark and potentially why it might not be full marks.
- The below work is snippets from sections 1 & 2 and only by putting the work all together would it be in the top band as the whole journey of the working notebook needs to be logical and systematic.

Section 1

1. Rationale for our starting point

Our stimulus, a BBC article on 'Boris Johnson[']s historical child sex abuse comments "horrific"'¹, (see Figure 1) details a controversial radio interview in which Boris claimed, 'police funding was being "spaffed up the wall" investigating historical allegations.' Upon reading the article I was dumbfounded and was forced to check the date of the article to be certain that he was Prime Minister when he made these comments. Furthermore, his deliberate use of the lexis 'spaffed', with sexual connotations, stirred a disgust and anger within me. Due to the triggering nature of the article, we decided as a group to discuss our feelings.

Highly personal and sensitive approach to the stimulus. The student shows a sense of collaboration and connection to the initial stimulus.

The discussion reminded me of a book I had read before called 'Dark Heart: The Shocking Truth of Hidden Britain' and its opening chapter entitled 'Children of the Forest'. The non-fiction book documents '*the politics of neoliberalism [that] released a wave of poverty over the lives of millions of men, women and children in the United Kingdom,*' giving

Research is far reaching and shows a logical response.

insight into the individual stories of young children 'who were selling themselves on the streets of the city'. These children's experiences shocked and terrified us, as children even younger than us were being 'molested' but were 'alright with it'. As a group, we decided it felt natural to portray the sexual physicality that these children experienced in a physical way, combining some of the text we had read from Dark Heart to explore the complexity of the thoughts and external actions of young people and their experiences. We were drawn to using DV8 as our practitioner as we could explore the storyline physically, communicating ideas clearly, and 'focusing on socio-political issues', hopefully allowing us to explore how we can communicate challenging context to an audience.

Excellent explanation, showing the connection between research and the development of ideas. Clear systematic journey of the process and restrictions leading to refinement of ideas

2. Dramatic influences - practitioner, research and live theatre.

We were inspired by 'The Race' and 'The Overcoat' by Gecko and their ability to convey deep human emotions without relying too heavily on scripts. Despite our initial concerns about the practicality of something this ambitious, we decided to workshop movements that focus on breathing and gaining a deeper appreciation of how spoken language forms only a small part of overall communication. The result was positive, as previously we were simply role playing spoken language which was not in keeping with the style of Gecko. This was especially evident as we aimed to apply this technique by using aggressive body language, such as clenched fists and foot stomping, as well loud grunting and glowering expressions when the husband and wife argue without using any words. We hoped this would evoke emotion from the audience, as previously we simply had simple dialogue, which took away from the overall meaning from the scene.

Evidence of workshopping practitioner techniques, student then goes on to show inspiration from live theatre.

Precise details provided and shows how research has impacted their overall piece.

3. Performance aims and intentions

Our group's dramatic intention is to encourage our audience to use the information already at their disposal to redefine their own accountability as advocates for freedom of information. Our group, inspired by Complicités attention to present issues, (they have 'been working with climate charity Julie's Bicycle since 2019', for example) is that the audience will take the lessons and questions we have raised in our work and apply this within their own lives to create positive social change.

Clear overall aims directly linked to practitioner. Student also reference impact on audience members. Clear and concise.

In the role of Carolyn, it was my personal aim to showcase the fact that experience, leadership, and authority do not excuse accountability. This would allow the audience to question the authority in their own lives and redefine accountability on every level of their surroundings.

Additionally, it was my personal aim to allow the audience to empathize with me, as the redefining of accountability must encourage open dialogue and empathy.

Clear individual character intentions once again identifying the impact it would have on the audience.

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Section 2

Extract A: Practitioner Focus is Complicite

Our creative and practical decisions successfully evolved from our collaboration. We performed our opening scene to our drama class and after receiving feedback, we realised that our classmates were initially confused about our socio-political messages. Ironically, it was because we had fully committed to Complicites experimental rehearsal techniques that rely on discovery, that we lost the storytelling aspect as well as 'the introductions [...] to make explicit the audience's relationship to the actors' which is central to the practitioner's style. Originally, we began the scene with choral work: all

three of us on stage using unison movement to demonstrate spray painting the wall, followed by the three children running about the stage, chaotically and at a fast pace, playing 'tag' to communicate their innocence and youth. However, on reflection we decided we needed to push the storytelling aspect as it is 'the heart of the company'. We were also aware of Complicités 'common theme that [...] is the acknowledgement of the audience', and since experiencing its effectiveness in both 'The Encounter' and 'A Disappearing Number' it was a technique we wanted to incorporate. So,

I suggested that we add a multi-role characterisation and utilised my vocal skills to distinguish my two characters, ensuring the audience was not confused. I introduced the characters 'I'm Jaime, this is Nina and that's Slim', in a split screen while Lorcan and Ava held a dynamic still image in character. Jaime's character voice was a high-pitched Glaswegian accent, and I projected with a loud volume. Then, after taking a sharp intake of breath, I stated 'Actually, that's a lie' in a lower tone to signify the shift in character.

Clear sense of evolving ideas throughout the piece.

Clear sense of refinement and development which is rooted from theory and practice and response to live theatre.



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My accent became sophisticated and I placed emphasis on consonants to speak with a clear diction as I narrated the prologue. By juxtaposing two completely different characters (Jaime and myself, 'an actor') in a single breath I ensured we 'involve the audience in ways other than just as passive observers; always asking ourselves why an audience needs to be present in order for the event to take place.' This split screen image (see Figure 7) with multi-rolling thus contributed to the cyclical structure of our performance, allowing us to avoid 'the one thing McBurney doesn't do [...] present straightforward linear stories', as we replicated this split screen at the end of the piece when I came out of role again.

Clear sense of reflection and evaluation of the piece so far. Consideration of the audience is present throughout and the candidate stays true to the style of the practitioner. There is a highly creative response to the practitioner.

Extract C: Practitioner Focus is DV8

However, on reflection this opening scene did not give an overall sense of narrative so to make this opening scene align more closely with Artaud's performance techniques, I chose to add sound effects reminiscent of a train, the chugging of the engine, the whistle and the steam. This represented the children being taken on a train to Auschwitz. Both the Balinese dance and the use of sound effects at the start of the piece were inspired by Artaud's notion 'theatre must have its own language, a language that is not the same as the language of words, but which is based on the actor'. In keeping with this idea, we attempted to use very little dialogue within our devising piece, instead focusing on glossolalia, grunts, screams and a monologue of pidgin German which I perform at the beginning and end of the performance.

Student is able to reflect on the performance aims and shows a clear journey from practical exploration to refinement using connections between theory and practice. The journey is logical and systematic.

Extract B - Practitioner Focus is Artaud

Perhaps the greatest refinement to our piece was reordering our scenes. Typically, a DV8 production would follow an episodic structure, wherein each individual scene would be autonomous yet connected by an overall theme.

We realised that our structure seemed to follow the chronological progression of an aging daughter, something that we felt risked making our piece feel predictable and, therefore, the dichotomy between ages less meaningful.

Consequently, we chose to change our opening to a directly intrusive and almost shocking moment, inspired by the opening line of Can We Talk About This, 'Do you feel superior to the Taliban?'. Now, our piece opened with the question 'What are your opinions on me having sex before marriage?' and we choreographed individual, sharp movements. I chose to stab my arms and knee upwards, bring them down with the same fast-paced energy and nudging my chin with the heel of my hand, maintaining a strained facial expression to emphasise my agitation.

The fast-paced combination of these movements mimicked the uncomfortable responses our fathers gave to the question, thus beginning our piece with a sense of unease that we would allude to throughout.

Excellent analysis and evaluation of the performance so far.

Clear sense of evolving creative ideas which are rooted from live theatre and discovery. The details are precise.

The student is able to evaluate the impact they hope this to have on the audience. Shows evidence of communicating meaning to the audience.

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