



GREEK THEATRE

Year 8

Lesson One



Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson I will have learnt:

- **All:** Certain aspects of Greek Theatre and how a chorus is used within Greek Theatre.
- **Most:** To experiment in groups around the idea of chorus, focusing on gestures, facial expressions and levels.
- **Some:** Specific facts about Greek Theatre and chorus and included them within performance and to comment effectively on peers performances.

Unison?

In groups of 5 you are to mind-map
your ideas on unison.
You have 2 minutes.

Discussion

- What do I mean by Unison?
- Has anyone heard of the word before?
 - If so, what examples are there?

OCCURRING AT THE SAME TIME AS ONE
ANOTHER
SYNCRONISATION

- Main focus of the lessons is to work together, as a chorus - in Unison.

Activities

- Pass the Clap - (whole class unison)

Concentration, accuracy - focus on energy, focus and eye contact.

- Mirror exercise - (whole class unison)

discreet while retaining accuracy, but must not discuss tactics!

The technique just we just used was an important technique for the Greek Chorus in Greek Theatre.

- Duplicity - (Paired unison)

In pairs, facing each, you are to copy each other's movements and facial expressions, just like a reflection in a mirror.

Accuracy, slowness and concentration are key. -Just mime - no dialogue. Take it in turns to lead.

- What are the difficulties with moving in unison?

Greek Theatre Facts

1. Performances took place in amphitheatres and these were very big.
2. Performances were performed in the open air.
3. Semi-circular shape with rows of tiered stone seating around it. The shape of the theatres gave everyone in the audience excellent viewing and also meant they could hear the actors well too.
4. Instead of one actor telling a story a group of actors known as a **chorus** worked together.
5. **Chorus** worked in movement and voice so that stories could be heard and movements seen.
6. A **chorus** consisted between 5 and 50 actors.
7. All the actors were men.
8. They wore large masks that exaggerated facial features and emotions. The mouth hole was large to help amplify the voices.
9. Greek plays were either comedies or tragedies. Tragedies were often about the past, whereas comedies tended to be about current and everyday life.



Chorus Activity One

- The purpose of the Greek Chorus - while moving in unison - was to show the *emotion* of a play's story with their gestures and facial expressions.
- In groups 5 - you are to **find your own way of representing** the following sequence of emotions using **facial expressions, movements and gestures**.
 - use *unison* and no sound.
 - pace,
 - a leader,
 - performance shapes - in a line, semi-circle, triangle?
- **Easy:** **HAPPY > SAD > ANGRY**
- **Medium:** **EXCITED > TIRED > BORED**
- **Hard:** **PROUD > NERVOUS > JEALOUS**

Plenary

- What is **one** purpose of the Greek Theatre you have learnt today?
- What does **Unison** mean?
- What do you think the **most important** things to remember are in creating good unison?
- What **facts** can you remember about Greek Theatre?



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Lesson Two



PASS
THE
RHYTHM

Greek Theatre???

What do you remember about Greek Theatre from last lesson?

You have 1 minute to discuss with your partner.

What do we remember about Chorus & Unison?

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson I will have learnt:

- **All:** Certain facts about a Greek Chorus and will have worked in a group as a Chorus.
- **Most:** To really experiment in groups as a chorus, focusing on over exaggerated gestures, facial expressions and levels.
- **Some:** To include specific facts about a Greek Chorus within performance. Thinking about certain dramatic techniques and to comment effectively on peers performances.

Chorus Facts

1. The chorus was one of the most important components of the play.
2. They narrated and reflected on the action.
3. Without them, the audience would have no background information, and the play would be more confusing.
4. Originally the chorus had twelve members.
5. They moved and spoken as one
6. They sang, or sometimes said, basic information.
7. They were the narrators of the play.

Chorus Activity

- Groups of 5

- 1) The hero had to prove that he was strong.
- 2) He was set a terrible task.
- 3) He fought the terrible monster.
- 4) The fight was hard and bloody.
- 5) The hero won.

- You must :
 - Add **an action** with the line you have.
 - *choosing actions, gestures, movements and facial expressions to reflect the meaning.*
- Join all 5 lines together.
- As a whole group you **must**:
 - move in unison
 - speak in unison,
 - have eye focus
 - direct address to the audience.

1) The hero had to prove that he was strong.

2) He was set a terrible task.

3) He fought the terrible monster.

4) The fight was hard and bloody.

5) The hero won.

Chorus Activity

- Groups of 5 you are to choreograph a short story (max 2 minutes) from one of the following titles:
 - 'Unison on the dance floor'
 - 'Unison in the cinema'
 - 'Unison on the football pitch'
- **MUST** display **unison** throughout
NO SOUND TO BE USED.

EXTENSION

- However, you could add more than one 'layer' of unison.
 - E.g.: the front row of the cinema can eat popcorn (in sync!), whilst the back row laughs at the film.

Plenary

- Describe two purposes of the Greek Chorus
- Thinking back to last lesson, can you relate any facts you learnt about Greek Theatre to suggest why the Ancient Greek's found a chorus so helpful?
- Are there any elements of the Greek Chorus that still exist today?



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Lesson Three



Warm Up Activity

- In groups
- You must create a freeze frame based on the emotion that give you.
- You need to create a scenario in your groups based on the emotion.
- YOU ONLY HAVE ONE MINUTE!!!

- In pairs discuss:

- 1) What is **exaggerated** acting?

- 2) Why **must** actors adopt this style when performing a piece of Greek Theatre?

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson I will have learnt:

- **All:** Why exaggerated acting style was necessary within Greek Theatre.
- **Most:** To really experiment in a group performance, focusing on over exaggerated gestures, facial expressions and levels.
- **Some:** To think about other dramatic techniques to use within performance and to comment effectively on peers performances.

Starter

- 1) Stand in a space on your own
- 2) When you hear a title or action you must individually create a frozen image based on that title.
- 3) If you do not freeze once I have shouted FREEZE then you are out!
- 4) Get Ready!

What makes an effective frozen image?

It wasn't just the chorus who used exaggeration in Greek Theatre.

Actors used precise gestures to represent clear emotions.



Exaggeration Experimentation

- In groups of 4-5
- You must **devise** a short original scene based on one of these titles:
 - "Complaint at the chocolate factory"
 - "Argument at breakfast"
 - "Crisis in the X-Factor studio"
 - "Robbery at a Post Office"

You Must:

- Use over the top acting style (exaggeration)
- Actors must only speak one person at a time.
- Must be accompanied by a posture and facial expression

Perform & Evaluate

1. Was there a particular movement or posture that worked particularly well?
2. Where there any emotions / key moments in the story that could have benefited from a movement or gesture that the group **didn't** use?
3. How realistic was the piece?

Plenary

- Why was exaggerated theatre so important?
- What skills can you take away from today's lesson for all drama lessons in the future?



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Lesson Four





TRAFFIC LIGHTS



 **RED** = STOP!

 **AMBER** = JUMP UP & TOUCH FLOOR!

 **GREEN** = GO!

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson I will have learnt:

- All:
- Most:
- Some: