



# St Benet Biscop Sixth Form

## Personal Development

### ***Drama and Theatre Studies***

#### **1. News articles/videos**

BBC News <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z47rxyc>

Sky News <https://news.sky.com/entertainment> (daily)

#### **2. MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)**

##### **Perspectives from the Stage: Actors Discuss Romeo and Juliet – University of Colorado Boulder**

*No specific background required. Just a desire to read Romeo & Juliet and learn about the play from actors! This course is meant for anyone who is reading Romeo & Juliet and would like to hear the perspectives of professional actors who have performed in the play. In completing this course, learners will be able to describe the plot of Romeo & Juliet, identify major characters and themes, analyse and interpret heightened text, and consider multiple theatrical approaches to the play.*

##### **Physical Theatre: Exploring the Slap – University of Leeds**

*Learn about Meyerhold's form of physical theatre, biomechanics, and understand and perform 'The Slap'. This course introduces you to world-renowned Russian director Meyerhold's technique of biomechanics.*

Additional courses can be found at [www.futurelearn.com](http://www.futurelearn.com)

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### 3. Digital Theatre

Digital theatre access:

- [https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/video?docid=do-9781350997738&tocid=do-9781350997738\\_6120709535001](https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/video?docid=do-9781350997738&tocid=do-9781350997738_6120709535001)
- Login: 7Mi@5Re@y!
- Password: 8HcW1Bj-g%

### 4. Plays:

#### Comedies

[London Assurance](#): Simon Russell Beale and Fiona Shaw star in this new version of Dion Boucicault's classic comedy

[One Man, Two Guvnors](#): Tony Award-winning James Corden plays Francis Henshall in the hilarious West End and Broadway hit

[She Stoops to Conquer](#): Directed by Jamie Lloyd with a cast including Cush Jumbo and Katherine Kelly

#### 20th Century Classics and Modern Plays

[Cat on a Hot Tin Roof](#): Sienna Miller stars alongside Jack O'Connell and Colm Meaney in Tennessee Williams' searing, poetic story

[The Cherry Orchard](#): 'Beautifully skewed, melancholic and haunting.' *The Stage*

[Consent](#): Nina Raine's powerful, painful, funny play which sifts the evidence from every side and puts justice herself in the dock.

[The Deep Blue Sea](#): Starring Helen McCrory, *Time Out* described it as 'Stunning. Exquisitely sad. Beautifully judged.'

[Les Blancs](#): This theatrical search for the soul of post-colonial Africa features Danny Sapani as Tshembe

[A Streetcar Named Desire](#): Starring Gillian Anderson, Ben Foster and Vanessa Kirby, *The Daily Telegraph* called it 'An absolute knock-out. Raw, emotional and deeply unsettling.'

[Translations](#): Brian Friel's modern classic, a powerful account of nationhood, described by *The Guardian* as 'A flawless production. A culture-clash masterpiece'

[Yerma](#): Billie Piper won an Olivier Best Actress award for her performance in Lorca's achingly powerful masterpiece

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## Shakespeare Plays

[Coriolanus](#): An award-winning performance from Tom Hiddleston in the title role.

[Hamlet](#): 'Tremendous. Rory Kinnear's performance is superb' The Times.

[Julius Caesar](#): Ben Whishaw and Michelle Fairley play Brutus and Cassius, David Calder plays Caesar and David Morrissey is Mark Antony.

[King Lear](#): Starring Sir Derek Jacobi and directed by Tony Award winning Michael Grandage, The Telegraph said it was 'The finest and most searching Lear I have ever seen.'

[Macbeth](#): First performed as part of the National Theatre's series of Shakespeare for younger audiences.

[Othello](#): Adrian Lester and Rory Kinnear jointly won the Evening Standard Best Actor Award for their performances in the iconic roles of Othello and Iago.

[Romeo and Juliet \(2017\)](#): Bijan Sheibani's thrilling production brings the greatest love story of all time alive for a new generation.

[Twelfth Night](#): Tamsin Greig as a transformed Malvolia, in a new twist on Shakespeare's classic comedy of mistaken identity.

[The Winter's Tale](#): The perfect introduction to Shakespeare for younger audiences.

## Literary Adaptations and Inspirations

[Treasure Island](#): Robert Louis Stevenson's classic adventure brought to life in a thrilling adaptation by Bryony Lavery.

[Wonderland](#): Inspired by Lewis Carroll's tale of Alice, this musical is a coming-of-age adventure for the online generation.

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## **Greek Classics and World Historical Drama**

[Antigone](#): Adapted by Don Taylor into a gripping political thriller with a cast including Jodie Whittaker and Christopher Eccleston.

[Medea](#): 'Extraordinary. Helen McCrory ascends to greatness' *The Sunday Times*.

[Dara](#): Shahid Nadeem's epic tale of the dispute that shaped modern-day India and Pakistan.

[Frankenstein](#): Benedict Cumberbatch and [Jonny Lee Miller](#) each play Victor Frankenstein and his creation in these **two performances** of Danny Boyle's smash-hit production.

[Jane Eyre](#): 'Aflame with passion. A picture of exultant feminism.' *The Observer*.

[Peter Pan](#): Sally Cookson directs this 'dazzling production' (*Radio Times*) of JM Barrie's classic.

[Small Island](#): *The Guardian* described this adaptation of Andrea Levy's Orange Prize-winning novel as 'One of the most important plays of the year.'

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## 5. Books

### [Breaking into Acting for Dummies by Larry Garrison and Wallace Wang](#)

*"Breaking into Acting for Dummies" is the silliest name for a book on acting because acting is certainly not for dummies. It takes a real education to look natural in front of an audience or camera. As an acting coach, my teaching style consists of myriad techniques learned over the years from some very gifted teachers in the industry.*

### [Audition by Michael Shurtleff](#)

*I consider this book to be the bible for aspiring actors. If you're just beginning your acting career, this is a great place to start! It covers everything you need to know to get the part. Mr. Shurtleff's 12 infamous guideposts have influenced my own work in developing my simple technique to help actors learn how to direct themselves. From relationships to finding the love and humour in the scene, Shurtleff's steps will help you perfect your audition every time.*

### [Meisner on Acting by Sanford Meisner](#)

*Meisner or Method? That is the question. Well, it may not really be an either-or. It's often insightful to know both. Meisner gives it to you straight on how to live truthfully in the moment under imaginary circumstances.*

### [Respect for Acting by Uta Hagen](#)

*Simple and straightforward, [Uta Hagen](#)'s profound book has helped generations of actors hone their craft. She introduces a series of exercises to help the actor connect to the moment, fellow actors, and the audience. "Who am I?" "What do I want?" and "What is my relationship?" are three of the nine questions explored to define your character's role specifically. Hagen also includes invaluable advice about stage nerves and how to stay fresh in a long run.*

### [An Actor Prepare by Constantin Stanislavsky](#)

*This book takes the actor through [Stanislavsky](#)'s self-developed system which helps the actor to master his craft as well as stimulate creativity and imagination. Now referred to as "method acting," the book includes a variety of exercises and some autobiographical experiences that focus on relaxation, concentration, and techniques that will help get the actor into character. Emotional memory and the "magic if" explored in his book laid the groundwork for much of the great acting today.*

### [Improvisation for the Theatre by Viola Spolin](#)

*Considered the mother of improvisation, [Viola Spolin](#) developed a series of acting exercises and theatre games to free the actor's creativity, allowing play beyond the scene. This book is great if you want to learn truthful acting and how to be in the moment.*

### [Actions: The Actor's Thesaurus by Marina Calderone](#)

*Acting means TO DO. Thousands of action words are alphabetised and categorised to help you find what you are doing in every beat. This book will help you play specific actions and get away from making general choices.*

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### [The Method: How the Twentieth Century Learned to Act by Isaac Butler](#)

*What, exactly, is "[Method acting](#)"? Isaac Butler tackles this elusive question in his historical recount of the craft, taking the reader from Stanislavsky's system all the way through the Method's influential—and controversial—evolution to its place as a modern cultural staple. Deemed "the most important book about acting" by Nathan Lane, Butler draws from a legendary cast of actors, writers, directors, and teachers in his narrative that invites an experience, rather than a read.*

## **6. Films/Documentaries**

### **All About Eve (1950)**

*"It's the quintessential movie about acting and theatre. It's smart, witty, sharp, funny, and heart-breaking." —[JV Mercanti](#), head of acting for the musical theatre program at Pace University's School of Performing Arts*

### **The Apartment (1960)**

*"It's an acting lesson in both simplicity and how playing love in a scene is always so much more interesting than anger or playing the victim. Jack Lemmon's acting is effortless; he flows and he allows the script to do all the work. Shirley MacLaine could easily play the bimbo, but instead she chooses to play a woman who is desperately looking for love, which sucks you straight into her performance. You fall in love with her." —[Douglas Taurel](#), NYC-based actor-producer.*

### **Captains Courageous (1937)**

*"I'd like to offer a film for every decade going back 100 years, but that's not what you asked, is it? So, I'm going to say 'Captains Courageous' starring Spencer Tracy, Lionel Barrymore, and child star Freddie Bartholomew. Written by Rudyard Kipling, directed by Victor Fleming (who later went on to direct 'Gone with the Wind' and 'The Wizard of Oz'), where this story begins is miles from where it ends. It doesn't disappoint. It's completely unexpected. Tracy took home his first Academy Award as best actor for this film. He had a bad perm and an even worse Portuguese accent, and yet he was astounding in this role. This film [was also nominated] for best picture, best editing, and best screenplay. And like all great art, it holds up even after 80 years. I challenge you to find it and discover this incredible film for yourself. Great stuff." —[Kate McClanaghan](#), L.A.-based casting director*

### **The Conversation (1974)**

*"Some people don't like action movies or thrillers, so telling them that the Gene Hackman film 'The Conversation' is a must-watch would be a waste of time. Many others that love those genres would never ever watch a film from 1974, despite the fact that it's one of the best films they're ever likely to see. It's a matter of both taste and curiosity.*

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### **Every Little Step**

*How's this for meta-theatrical? "Every Little Step" chronicles the most difficult challenge an aspiring Broadway actor could undertake: booking a role in the classic show about aspiring Broadway actors. Following the ups and downs of real-life dancers auditioning for the 2006 revival of "A Chorus Line," this documentary tugs at the heartstrings of starry-eyed triple threats everywhere. The film features interviews with both struggling auditioners and the musical's creators, providing an astonishing look at what drives Broadway hopefuls.*

### **Looking for Richard**

*Al Pacino's directorial debut is ambitious in scope yet relaxed in style. "Looking for Richard" features fabulous performances of "Richard III," excerpts by a cast that includes [Kevin Spacey](#), Winona Ryder, and Alec Baldwin, and juggles those scenes with a broader examination of Shakespeare's relevance in American culture, questioning scholars and random passer-by alike. As both Richard and the film's director, Pacino demonstrates a fierce passion for the Bard—a tutorial in both great acting and the turmoil behind it.*

### **Casting By**

*Tom Donahue's in-depth look at the underappreciated casting profession has been called a masterpiece by critics and industry professionals alike. Focusing specifically on Marion Dougherty, the pioneer whose casting choices shaped Hollywood throughout the second half of the 20th century, this doc asks some of the world's most iconic actors—Woody Allen, Clint Eastwood, Dustin Hoffman, and countless others—about the people who helped turn them into icons.*

### **The Standbys**

*Speaking of underappreciated, ["The Standbys"](#) highlights some of the hardest-working performers in the theatre: the ones who seldom get to perform at all. The demanding world of Broadway understudies and standbys finally gets the spotlight as director Stephanie Riggs follows three actors on the verge of their big break, as talented as the stars they occasionally get to replace onstage.*

### **Searching for Debra Winger**

*Rosanna Arquette's frank examination of women's roles in Hollywood is worth watching if only to hear from its avalanche of amazing stars: [Robin Wright](#)! Whoopi Goldberg! Frances McDormand! Inspired by Debra Winger's self-imposed retirement and "The Red Shoes," a film about a woman forced to choose between her art and love, this series of interviews lays bare the frustration still facing many female actors who dare to grow older.*

### **The Actor's Apprentice**

*A documentary created by actor Luke Dale, on the importance of the UK repertory theatre system and the role of the actor in 2017. Featuring interviews with Dame Judi Dench, Sir Derek Jacobi, Imelda Staunton, Jim Carter, Steven Berkoff, Mike Alfreeds and many more.*

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