

Performing Arts Written Commentary

In our Workshops we developed our skills Dance, Drama and Music which were all based on a certain stimulus. For Music it was a person creeping up to a house, Dance was a mental hospital, and Drama was the seven deadly sins. We combined all of these to create a good structure and a good combined piece that fulfilled all our intentions. These were to have a good impact on the audience and to show our stimuli.

To make our performance perfect we had to involve these three steps, Improvisation, Rehearsal, and Perform. By doing all of these we would ensure that our piece would be perfect.

When improvising I had planned to make a music piece that would build the dynamics of the piece and to build tension in the audience. By using layers in the music this would set the scene in our combined piece before we had performed a movement. Then by using our workshops we started to create a piece, which would express our stimuli. By using the music to set the scene the audience almost knew what to expect and this is a useful technique as it is easier to perform with music. Dance contributed to the piece in a different way to drama, instead of using speech in dance we used gestures to express how characters were feeling this worked nicely with the rhythm of the music. Drama was combined with each of these to finish off the piece nicely, speech was used along with gestures in dance to really express the characters' feelings to the audience.

When we improvised our pieces, it became obvious that we had to add structure to our piece instead of just improvisation. We were finding that pieces changed every time that we performed them. To remedy this problem we all talked through the piece so everyone knew what they were doing instead of performing with prompts. This solved the problem well and each time we improvised I felt our piece worked better every time. This was especially important in music the theme of our music was clear but it was hard trying to find music to fit this theme. We rehearsed and finally found a piece that would suit the theme of our piece. Once we had our outline of our piece we had to rehearse so the piece would be perfect. In the piece we used texture and harmony to produce a good piece that we recorded. Texture, rhythm and harmony produced a catchy piece that was perfect for our piece. In dance we improvised one section of the piece and then built on the original motif of a mental hospital. This required research into conditions and we used trial and error to make each piece really good. While rehearsing we combined all our sections and rehearsed all of them together this worked particularly well.

During performing we encountered many links between Dance, Drama and Music. There were links between dance and the music as the music became faster the dance also complimented the music and became faster. When the music had thick texture then so was the dance as many characters used levels to create dynamics. In one section in our dance piece we used high notes on a piano to create a tip toeing effect as if a person was rushing then slowing down. These two links between music and dance created a good effect.

When we were devising our pieces we found it difficult to come up with an idea without getting on with the improvisation. When improvising our piece had little structure and it lacked the consistency of a good piece. When we added structure to our piece the rehearsal went much better and it became obvious when performing that all pieces needed structure even when improvised to become the best it could be.

When going through the process of our pieces I think that the most important process was rehearsal. This was really important because every time we rehearsed our piece got much better every time. Once our improvised idea was quite clear we had to rehearse it to give it consistency. Our main method was to improvise an idea and once this idea was established we could rehearse this part and so on. Once we had all of our parts we started to piece the sections together, while thinking about timing and relation to the music. Once we had the main structure and order of the pieces we combined them all together. Then rehearsal of the full piece could begin we could show our teacher the full rehearsal and then she would give us advice on how to improve the piece once this had been established we could rehearse the new idea and see if it worked well.

In our performance objectives one was to have a piece, which lasted for three minutes. This meant that our piece had to have timing. In dance it was massively important to have structure and timing bearing in mind that we would be performing to a recorded track in music that we had recorded earlier. To make timing perfect we timed each section and rehearsed to a timer so that our timing was correct. This ensured our last dance movement ended when the music did. When rehearsing it was hard to concentrate and time yourself to a movement but once practised each member of the group finally mastered it. When rehearsing we also had to get the balance of the piece right, this would ensure the final combined piece would have equal parts of music, dance and drama included. While rehearsing it became apparent that certain parts weren't working and didn't fit in well. In music we encountered problems in only using one part of the piano for high notes instead of using the entire piano to create a better effect. My group realised this and we changed the instrument to a keyboard. In dance we found that some ideas

didn't flow with the overall piece these inflowing movements had to be changed or taken out, once this was amended then our piece flowed once again. In drama when rehearsing we would receive positive criticism when presenting to the class then next session we would take their advice on board and change what they felt wasn't working. This positive feedback from the rest of class proved to be beneficial in the rehearsal process.

When thinking about performing our group had to take into account what we wanted to portray to the audience in all three performances. In our dance performance our group wanted to portray the agony and anger inside a mental home. To portray this we all researched our own condition and looked up the symptoms and the sort of actions that the person would make. For example I had manic depression, which is where a person could be very happy one minute and really depressed another. I expressed this by changing levels and dynamics a lot to portray that I was having ups and downs. Another person in my group was suffering with bulimia and she portrayed that by having sharp jerking movements to portray sickness. By using our body movements as speech towards the audience I believe we achieved getting our point across to the audience. In our Drama piece we had a motif of the seven deadly sins and had to make a short piece based on that motif. We decided to relive certain people's lives and explain to the audience why they had gone to hell or heaven based on the seven deadly sins. To portray we were in heaven or hell we all wore black to symbolise us all being equal and everyone being like each other. We walked slowly and let our limbs flow with our movements to portray to the audience that we were dead. This worked particularly well with the music, as we moved with the music, each beat was also a step in our movements. We used links between drama and music well here to create an era on stage. In our music piece we wanted to give the audience the feeling of suspense so we used sharp high notes to give the impression of tension and suspense. This worked well with the Drama piece and again a link was made between the atmosphere of both pieces. The music piece created lots of suspense for the drama piece to be linked in with, by using high notes and using pauses to create suspense. By combining all of our pieces I think our group achieved what we aimed to achieve by using pauses to create suspense in music. In Drama we all wore black to symbolise equality and in Dance we used movements and dynamics to create a great piece. By using all of these techniques we expressed our pieces how we wanted them to be portrayed by the audience.

Before performing our group had to overcome our nerves and remember our structure and centre ourselves and go over the performance from

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rehearsal. This is where all our rehearsal really paid off, but we had to make adjustments to our costumes as not everyone had black. Our group decided to have one more rehearse before we performed ours to the camera, it was difficult for some members of the group became nervous because of being recorded. We performed our piece and the nerves soon left when we started our piece, overall the performance went well and there was only one minor hiccup. This was dealt with well by the person who went wrong. In our Dance piece it was long sequence and there was a lot to remember unlike the Drama piece we had just performed. Everything went well and the audience seemed to be in suspense as we had planned when improvising our piece. When performing the audience were all quite and our techniques using the music and dance together seemed to work. After our performance the audience congratulated us, which was reassuring. Overall our performance went well and I look forward to the next time I perform.