



# DNA Resource Pack

## for the Edexcel GCSE Drama Specification

- Over 4 HOURS of filmed resources
- 11 Colour Coded Character Cards
- 15 Pages of example questions
- 6 Page breakdown of Performance skills
- Colour Coded Exam style questions
- Director and Designer role cards
- Staging Suggestion cards
- And Much More.....!

Scan the code for  
access to our  
filmed resources!



## **Welcome to the Bird Brains DNA Exam BUSTING Resource Pack!**

Anna Friend from Quirky Bird Theatre and teacher Kirsten Lane have created a resource pack for DNA, with an emphasis on the Edexcel specification. It's designed to enable teachers to create effective and complex lesson planning to explore the text and guide students towards success in the exam. The entire pack is geared towards simplicity for you and clarity for your students. It will be coloured coded throughout so that you find extracts, characters and elements that link them really easily.

So, for those days when you get collared in the corridors and end up rushing in at the beginning of the lesson, now you can just grab the bits you need and your DNA lesson is SORTED!

Our Resource Pack contains;

- Colour coded extracts from the text which relate to the characters and the locations ie: If you want to explore a wood extract go to the brown coded extracts, if you want to look at Cathy—choose Purple!
- A breakdown of the entire text into exam style example questions for the 6, 9 and 12 marker
- A list of performance skills used in the exam and how to write about these
- Character cards to enable students to understand each character and how to approach them in performance
- Resource cards as Director and Designer from Quirky Bird Theatre's Anna Friend talking through the Creative and Interpretative processes
- Staging cards to enable students to consider options and how to discuss these in the exam
- Example student answers for the 14 and 9 marker
- A student hand out of Exam Busting Top Tips from Kirsten Lane
- DNA—The Revision Board Game!
- Templates and to make discovering this text fun and achievable!

In addition to these, you will have access to our filmed resources, just scan the code below!

- Access to a filmed workshop which breaks down and analyses approaches to the 4,6,9 and 12 marker for the Edexcel GCSE Drama Specification - this is over 2 hours of discussion, analysis, performance and directed action from Anna Friend and Kirsten Lane with the 2020 DNA Company
- Access to the full filmed Q&A session with Anna Friend - over 2 hours of FAQ's with the Director and Designer of the DNA UK Tour 2017 - 2020.
- Access to rehearsal footage from the DNA 2020 Tour, including cast discussion and character analysis.
- Access to our 14 marker breakdown with Kirsten Lane and special guests!



Scan the code for  
access to our  
filmed resources!



PHIL

LEAH

RICHARD

CATHY

JOHN TATE

MARK

JAN

DANNY

LOU

BRIAN

ADAM

FIELD EXTRACT QUESTIONS

WOOD EXTRACT QUESTIONS

STREET EXTRACT QUESTIONS



# PHIL

Central character in the text. Takes on the role of the leader, formulating the plan to control the situation. Phil and Leah are the 'parents' of this group, the eldest alongside Cathy and Richard and he is the most respected male character. The group look to him more and more as the situation spirals out of control.

Phil is a mostly silent character who only speaks three times in the play. Each time he is creating solutions that will control the situation that this group have found themselves in. Phil only speaks when he has something significant to say or when it is required to create action.

At the end of the play we see him crushed by guilt as a result of his actions.

## Key Characteristics:

Decisive, self-contained, controlled, aloof, arrogant, manipulative

## Character Questions:

How does Phil feel about Leah?

Why doesn't Phil respond to Leah's questions?

Is Phil an evil genius or a reluctant problem solver?

What bothers Phil most at the end of the play?

Is Phil the most powerful person in the play?

How did Phil's relationship with Leah begin?



## **KEY RELATIONSHIPS:**

LEAH: Has known Phil since Primary school, former neighbours. Best friends. Provides his moral compass.

RICHARD: One of the higher status characters, holds respect for Phil without overly challenging him.

## A Director's Perspective

When working on my vision for Phil I start by looking within the text to find clues about his character and then work on an interpretation that I share with the actor. The one aspect that has always interested me is how little Phil talks and it is this that has led me create a full family background for him that can help flesh out the character on stage.

For me Phil is part of a large family, a middle child with 4 other siblings and he has learnt that if he is quiet, doesn't make a fuss he can slide out of the house without being noticed. His house is very noisy and so he finds the incessant noise from Leah both familiar and comforting and is able to drown this out to become background, just like at home.

## Actor Considerations

Think about listening and how Phil is responding during Leah's monologues.

Consider how to remain active in the scene

Is the plan that Phil creates in the John Tate scene as spontaneous as he says?

Experiment with levels of emotional engagement in the final scene, what is Phil responding to?

Think about how to use both stillness and silence— he needs to control the space.



Above Bottom: George Hargreaves as Phil 2018-2019

Above Top: Harry Freeman as Phil 2019-2020

## What Do I do?

The role of the director varies from project to project but in essence you are responsible for what people see on the stage in terms of the actors performances, shape of the piece and interpretation. You will lead the rehearsal process and enable the actors to give you the performance you are looking for. This process can take many forms from straightforward direction in terms of 'blocking' the text from taking the actors through exercises that will help them discover and develop their character. In terms of DNA you will need to make decisions about how you see each character and share these ideas with the actors through discussion and off text exercises. You are also responsible for creating a positive working atmosphere where your actors feel supported and able to work together creatively.

## Key Questions

**What am I looking for from the overall production?** ie: do I want it to be really physical/contemporary/emotional?

**How can I achieve my vision?** ie: if I want this to be a physical theatre piece you need to work with the actors as and establish the physical language of the piece

**How can I achieve a positive working atmosphere?** Make it light and fun to work, recognise good ideas and work through problems with the actor. No one likes being told that they aren't doing it right. It is your job to help them understand what you are looking for and enable that process.

# THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR

## Mark and Jan

Their scenes are important as they open each unit of the text and the play as a whole so in terms of your audience this first impression is vital. So make the decision about how you see their dynamic ie: are they friends or more than that, is Jan really earnest or really annoying, is Mark bored by Jan or genuine? Think about pace and pause within the scenes and find the comedy!

## Ensembles Scenes

The most important element of the ensemble scenes is the stage movement as you have 11 characters on stage which means you could have either too much movement, making it visually confusing or not enough movement, making it boring and static. It is also important that you look at what type of energy and atmosphere you are trying to achieve ie: in the John Tate scene there is a slightly excited edge to some of the cast members and a power struggle but in They Found the Man (filmed extract) the underlying energy is fear and there is a change of loyalties for some characters. These subtleties can be shown through small movements within the cast, even a change in posture. For example when Mark is being attacked for framing the postman, Jan might turn her body towards him or move towards him to offer him protection or comfort.

### Phil and Leah

A central dynamic for the play with two very influential characters. As the director you need to have a clear vision for both characters. It is possible for both to be played as one-note with Phil just being a Psychopath and Leah an attention seeking chatterbox but if this is the case then these roles will lose depth and be less interesting to watch. You can refer to the characters cards in this pack to find out about my interpretation for Phil and Leah or make your own decisions. The important thing is be clear and make sure there is creative justification within the text ie: If you decide to make Phil a really bright and chatty character, this will contradict his actions within the text.





**Phil 6 markers**

**Pages 24-26 The Plan!**

You are going to play Phil.

He takes control of the situation and comes up with a plan.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show his leadership skills.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Pages 26-28 Leah's 2<sup>nd</sup> monologue – Bonobos**

You are going to play Phil.

He remains silent throughout and eats.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show his unwillingness to respond to Leah.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Pages 30-32 Leah's 3<sup>rd</sup> monologue- I killed Jerry**

You are going to play Phil.

He remains silent throughout and eats.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show he doesn't care that she killed her hamster and is more interested in food.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Pages 36-38 DNA evidence!**

You are going to play Phil.

He remains silent throughout the conversation about finding the man.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show he is listening intently.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Pages 39-41 The 2<sup>nd</sup> plan!**

You are going to play Phil.

He threatens to hurt Brian.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show his bullying nature and volatile personality.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion.



**Pages 41-43 Leah's 4<sup>th</sup> monologue 'De ja vu'**

You are going to play Phil.

He finally responds to Leah but with a negative response.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show his lack of commitment to have a conversation with Leah. You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Pages 49-51 Adam Returns**

You are going to play Phil.

He says hello to Adam but remains silent for the rest of the extract.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show that he could be thinking about another plan. You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Pages 56-58 'I'm Dead'**

You are going to play Phil.

He is taking control of the situation and making sure nobody says anything about Adam being alive.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show he has the ultimate say about Adam. You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Page 58 only.....**

You are going to play Phil.

He says he is in charge and puts his trust in Cathy to sort out Adam.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show he will do anything to protect himself and the gang. You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Pages 59-61 Plastic Bag!**

You are going to play Phil.

He orders Cathy and Brian to kill Adam.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show he is in charge and makes others do his 'dirty work'.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

**Pages 63-65 'Richard replaces Leah'**

You are going to play Phil.

He remains silent throughout and for the first time does not eat.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show he is not the same and misses Leah and is not relaxed enough to eat anymore.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

## John Tate 6 markers

### Pages 12-14 Adam is dead!

You are going to play John Tate.

He is trying his hardest to take control of the situation.

As a performer, give three suggestions of how you would use performance skills to show his attempt at leadership.

You must provide a reason for each suggestion.

## John Tate 12 marker

### Pages 12-14 Adam is dead!

John Tate is trying his hardest to take control of the situation.

As a director, discuss how the performer playing this role might demonstrate his high status to the audience in this extract and the complete play.

You must consider:

- Voice
- Physicality
- Stage directions and stage space



Pictures Left to Right show:

Joe Bicknell as John Tate DNA Tour 2018-2019

Rob Bradhsaw as John Tate and Joanna Miller as Lou DNA Tour 2019—2020

Joe Bicknell as John Tate and Ryan Carroll as Richard DNA Tour 2018—2019

## 12 MARKER CHEAT SHEET

<b>Voice</b>	Extract
	Complete play
<b>Physicality</b>	Extract
	Complete play
<b>Use of stage space</b>	Extract
	Complete play