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Analytical writing for Drama – Verbs for students to discuss their own and others' performances

This resource was created to support the written coursework component of the GCSE Drama course at Mulberry School for Girls. Students were familiar with at least some of the analytical verbs below through encountering and using them in English, but were often not realising that they could be used in other subjects – in this case Drama. This vocabulary is useful to students for analysing and evaluating professional theatre productions they have seen, as well as for writing about their own performances.

Past tense…	Present/ Continuous tense…	In an 'analytical writing for Drama' sentence…
Accentuated	Accentuate(s)	The actors' costumes **accentuated** aspects of their character.
Affected	Affect(s)	Our use of mournful music at the end of each short scene was designed to **affect** the audience emotionally.
Alluded to	Allude(s) to	The script also **alludes to** the Second World War, which rumbles angrily in the distance.
Amplified	Amplify(~~y~~ies)	Texture and touch became an extra dimension of the choreography, their sensuality **amplified** by the physically charged music.
Articulated	Articulate(s)	We decided to use freeze frames. Each character then in turn came to life and **articulated** their thoughts.
Built	Build(s)	The short, frantic scenes **built** tension at the beginning of the performance.
Connected	Connect(s)	The speech at the end of the performance **connected** to the opening dialogue.
Communicated	Communicate(s)	The character's angst was effectively **communicated** by the leading actor.
Compounded	Compound(s)	The lighting and costumes were colourful and **compounded** the energetic feel of the show.
Conveyed	Convey(s)	The show brilliantly **conveys** a sense of how frightening the world seems through Joy's eyes.

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Created	**Create(s)**	*Our opening scene eerily **creates** an **atmosphere** of suffocation.*
Deepened	**Deepen(s)**	*The richness of the adaptation was **deepened** as scenes simultaneously twisted and looped between time frames.*
Depicted	**Depict(s)**	*We wanted to **depict** the complexity of the relationship between a mother and a daughter.*
Demonstrated	**Demonstrate(s)**	*The performers **demonstrated** remarkable versatility.*
Displayed	**Display(s)**	*In this scene, we tried to **display** the political turmoil of the time our piece was set in.*
Echoed	**Echo(es)**	*The recurrent screeching of the England-bound train was **echoed** by the deeply unsettling sound of the Ratcatcher's pipe.*
Elicited	**Elicit(s)**	*The character's evil nature **elicited** jeers and boos from the audience.*
Embodied	**Embody(¥ies)**	*Blanche and Stanley are **embodiments** of two very contrasting viewpoints of life.*
Emphasised	**Emphasise(s)**	*His tortured mental state was **emphasised** by clever use of scenery.*
Encapsulated	**Encapsulate(s)**	*We wanted every facial expression to **encapsulate** the hardship of this character's life.*
Encouraged	**Encourage(s)**	*The audience was **encouraged** to confront their own attitudes and prejudices throughout the performance.*
Establishes	**Establish(es)**	*We wanted to **establish** the fact that the characters all have a secret of some kind early on in the piece.*
Evoked	**Evoke(s)**	*The show powerfully **evoked** the horror and waste of the First World War.*
Exaggerated	**Exaggerate(s)**	*Like the entire show itself, this scene started off with **exaggerated** movements that fluidly quicken to a chaotic dance.*
Examined	**Examine(s)**	*Our piece **examines** the nature of childhood and memory.*
Exemplified	**Exemplify(¥ies)**	*The play's point is that we live in an age in which we are bombarded by information, and the play **exemplifies** this by requiring the audience to get to grips with such a vast array of characters and ideas.*
Exhibited	**Exhibit(s)**	*This particular performance **exhibited** the anger and discontent of the era in which the play is set.*

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Explained	Explain(s)	*Monologues and cross-cutting helped **explain** the complexity of our characters' lives and thoughts.*
Explored	Explore(s)	*We wanted to **explore** the theme of persecution by looking at the lives of people from very different social backgrounds.*
Exposed	Expose(s)	*The performance **exposed** the tensions that underpin families.*
Expressed	Express(es)	*Strobe lighting helped **express** chaos and confusion.*
Forced	Force(s)	*The audience is **forced** to consider the moral complications in making such a difficult decision.*
Foregrounded	Foreground(s)	*The stage set **foregrounded** the theme of conflict before the play had even begun.*
Foreshadowed	Foreshadow(s)	*The opening sequence immediately grabbed the audience's attention and **foreshadowed** the spectacular and nightmarish nature of the show.*
Formed	Form(s)	*We positioned ourselves in a way that allowed the audience to **form** a perception of the dynamics in this family.*
Highlighted	Highlight(s)	*We **highlighted** this nervous tension by including prolonged silences, slow movements and eye contact between these two characters.*
Heightened	Heighten(s)	*The in the round setting of the New Vic **heightened** this sense of claustrophobia.*
Hinted	Hint(s)	*Through this character's narration, we **hinted** at what happens in the climax of the piece.*
Impacted	Impact(s)	*This particular sequence **impacted** greatly on the audience.*
Implied	Imply(~~y~~ies)	*The staging of the tenement windows was inspired, and the sense of alienation that came with the high-rise flats was subtly **implied.***
Indicated	Indicate(s)	*Appreciative laughter from the audience **indicated** that this was a situation familiar to many people.*
Invited	Invite(s)	*We wanted to **invite** our audience to empathise with the leading character.*
Intensified	Intensify(~~y~~ies)	*The harsh, white lighting served to **intensify** the bleakness of the events, but became tiring to watch after a while.*
Introduced	Introduce(s)	*Later on, we were **introduced** to this character's nemesis, and were given an insight into their troubling relationship.*

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Juxtaposed	Juxtapose(s)	*Oh What a Lovely War **juxtaposed** jolly, vaudevillian routines with stark projections of life in the trenches.*
Manifested	**Manifest(s)**	*Lucky's monologue in Act I appears as a **manifestation** of a stream of repressed thoughts and emotions.*
Narrated	**Narrate(s)**	*Like the character who **narrated** this story, the audience watched with horrified curiosity.*
Perceived	**Perceive(s)**	*By examining what isn't said, the audience were able to **perceive** the underlying tension between these two characters.*
Personified	**Personify(ies)**	*The leading character was youthful loneliness and teenage angst **personified**.*
Pervaded	**Pervade(s)**	*A sense of gloom, created through sombre music and ghostly sound effects, **pervaded** the entire production.*
Portrayed	**Portray(s)**	*We wanted to **portray** the difficulties of change in a convincing way.*
Presented	**Present(s)**	*The audience was immediately **presented** with the central dilemma of the drama.*
Promoted	**Promote(s)**	*The message at the heart of our piece **promotes** acceptance and understanding over hostility and judgement.*
Reinforced	**Reinforce(s)**	*The final scenes **reinforced** the play's major concern – that money and power can corrupt even good people.*
Represented	**Represent(s)**	*The huge pillars that flanked the stage **represented** wealth, power and authority.*
Resonated	**Resonate(s)**	*This particular issue **resonated** with me personally, and this is why my group decided to explore it in our own piece.*
Revealed	**Reveal(s)**	*We decided to only **reveal** this part of the character's back story towards the end of the piece.*
Showed	**Show(s)**	*The play **showed** its audience that appearances can be inaccurate or even deceptive.*
Signified	**Signify(ies)**	*We used costume to **signify** various aspects of the characters wearing them.*
Symbolised	**Symbolise(s)**	*The modern world was **symbolised** by carefully chosen props - a mobile phone and lap-top computer.*
Subverted	**Subvert(s)**	*The play both respects and **subverts** the mystery genre.*

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Suggested	**Suggest(s)**	*The lead character's immaculate appearance suggested a calm, collected and together individual, and this made their subsequent breakdown even more shocking.*
Supported	**Support(s)**	*The stage set, lighting and sound effects **supported** the ultimate message of the play.*
Typified	**Typify(~~y~~ies)**	*This character's anguished cries that closed the first act **typified** the difficulties experienced by young women in this era.*
Underlined	**Underline(s)**	*We felt that having the characters deliver their speeches at opposite ends of the performance space **underlined** the division between them.*
Underpinned	**Underpin(s)**	*An interesting design concept **underpinned** the whole production.*