

Performing Shakespeare

Oracy Component - How to Create a Showstopper!



Your Oracy Component: Set the Stage for Success!

Your oracy component is a 2-minute introduction to your performance – and it's just as important, and worth just as many marks, as the performance itself! Think of it as your chance to hook the audience and set the tone.

This is where you:

1. Introduce your performance piece
2. Identify the character you're playing
3. Explain why you chose your piece
4. Highlight its key themes
5. Share what you hope to achieve through your performance

The judges love hearing your perspective and what the piece means to you personally. It's also a great opportunity to show how well you understand the text by connecting it to broader themes and even your own experiences.



Key Consideration Points

If you are struggling with writing your oracy component, consider the following points:



- Is your character expressing difficult/dangerous/mischievous/funny ideas?
- Are they in crisis?
- Are they trying to make a decision?
- Are there difficult words or metaphors that captured your attention?
- Are performative cues given in the piece?
- Does this piece mean something to you personally?

Top Secret Tips

Here are some hot-off-the-press tips from our judges based on oracy components they judged last year!



- Make it personal – share what the piece and characters mean to you
- Explain why you feel connected to the piece you've chosen
- Write it yourself – authenticity is key
- If referencing modern context, clearly explain its relevance to your performance and the audience
- Stay grounded, and be mindful of body language
- Don't shy away from this opportunity – use it to deepen your connection to the piece and show what resonates most with you

Excellent Example

Check out last year's winner, [Angelo's masterful introduction](#) to his performance as Mark Antony from Julius Ceaser, Act 3 Scene 2.



Angelo opens his piece with valuable historical context. He speaks thoughtfully about the themes and shares his personal motivation for choosing it, giving the performance even greater depth. He also sets the scene clearly, explaining what has happened in the play leading up to his excerpt, making it easy for the audience to follow along. Angelo sprinkles in humour and addresses the audience with confidence and warmth. While clearly well-rehearsed, his delivery remains natural and conversational – never robotic. His pauses are especially effective, giving words space to land, and he also links the text to the present day, showing how its themes remain powerful and relevant today.

Oracy Component Checklist

Before you take the stage, make sure your oracy component ticks all the boxes:

☐

Have I introduced my piece clearly?

Did I mention the title, character and where the scene sits in the wider story?

☐

Have I explained why I chose this piece?

Have I shared what drew me to it and why it matters to me?

☐

Did I highlight key themes or ideas?

Have I helped the audience understand the deeper message behind the words?

☐

Have I made it personal?

Did I connect the piece to my own experiences, emotions or beliefs?

☐

Did I show a strong understanding of the text?

Have I explored metaphors, difficult ideas or what makes the character interesting?

☐

Did I link the piece to the present day (if relevant)?

Have I shown how the themes still apply to modern life?

☐

Is my delivery confident and engaging?

Am I speaking clearly, with warmth, expression and good body language?

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Have I practiced enough to sound natural?

Am I using pauses to let important ideas land?

☐

Did I write it myself, in my own voice?

Does it sound like me – honest and authentic?

☐

Have I timed it to fit within 2 minutes?

Have I kept it focused and punchy, without rushing?