

# Drama Summer Holiday Task

**We would like you to show us how well you can analyse and explain your intentions and practical decisions you have (or might do for those who did not attend Welcome to College Day) as an actor performing the extract selected.**

Your essay is to be handed in at the first lesson in September.

In order to do this we would like you to write about how you would perform the role of one of the characters in the extract. There are '**Given Circumstances**' stated by the playwright at the start of the play:

- 1941
- 7 years old
- Rural Gloucestershire (West Country – Forest of Dean area)

And details concerning the 3 roles are given through stage directions, dialogue and actions in this scene. From the script you can gather some hints about their home lives, upbringing and relationships.

Write an essay (typed) 1 side in answer to the following question:

As an actor, explain how you would perform **one** of the roles in the scene at specific moments\* in order to communicate your interpretation of the role and to create your desired audience response(s).

(\* You should use quotes from the script to enable you to pinpoint moments)

<i>Some useful specialist terms</i>		
<i>VOCAL</i>	<i>PHYSICAL</i>	<i>Subtext</i>
<i>Pace</i>	<i>Gesture</i>	<i>Motivation/Objective</i>
<i>Pause</i>	<i>Posture / Stance</i>	<i>Given Circumstances</i>
<i>Pause</i>	<i>Movement/Gait</i>	<i>Tempo</i>
<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Facial expression</i>	<i>Mood</i>
<i>Power</i>	<i>Eye contact</i>	
<i>Pressure</i>	<i>Physical contact</i>	<i>Downstage (DS)</i>
<i>Tone</i>	<i>Proximity</i>	<i>Upstage (US)</i>
<i>Accent</i>	<i>Comic business</i>	<i>Centre stage (CS)</i>
<i>Timing</i>	<i>Costume</i>	<i>Stage Right (SR)**</i>
<i>Dialogue</i>		<i>Stage Left (SL)**</i>

<b>USR</b>	<b>USC</b>	<b>USL</b>
<b>CSR</b>	<b>CS</b>	<b>CSL</b>
<b>DSR</b>	<b>DSC</b>	<b>DSL</b>
<b>Audience</b>		

\*\* Remember that 'stage left' and 'stage right' is the actor's left and right facing the audience.

## Scene 5 *Blue Remembered Hills* by Dennis Potter

*Two seven-year-old girls, Angela, pretty, with ringlet curls and blue ribbons, and Audrey, who is plain, with cheap owl-like metal-framed glasses and short, straight hair, are “playing house” with the splay-footed, timid, anaemic-looking boy nicknamed Donald Duck, who has shoes or boots, but no socks. He also has nasty scabs round his mouth. An abused child*

*They have a battered, squeaking old pram with a buckled wheel, which holds a chocolate-coloured china doll called “Dinah”. Dinah, when tilted, closes her eyes and emits a plaintive little “Ma-ma! Ma-ma!”*

*Pretty Angela – who owns the doll – tilts and tilts Dinah, watched with an extremely aggressive expression by disgruntled Audrey*

**Angela** (*as Dinah “cries”*) Now, now, now. Go to sleep, Dinah. You naughty, naughty, naughty little babby.

**Audrey** Smack her one in the chops, Angela. That’ll keep her quiet!

**Donald** No, no. You can’t do that. No smacking. Not in my house.

**Angela** (*to Dinah*) There, there, there. Mummy is with oo den.

**Donald** You can’t hit a little babby, Audrey. You’d kill it.

**Audrey** What dost thee know about it, Donald Duck? You ant never had a babby. Smack her arse, Angela.

**Donald** I be supposed to be the daddy here, byunt I? And – and – don’t call me Donald Duck.

**Angela** No. Don’t call him that, Aud. You *are* the daddy, Donald. Coming home from work, aren’t you?

**Donald** (*smirking*) That’s right. I be tired out and all, working on them sawmills. I cut me thumb off and all. (*He imitates a saw*) Zzzzzzzzz-chop! Ow! Ow! Bang goes me thumb.

**Angela** Oh, dear. Poor, poor Donald. My poor husband.

**Donald** Ow! Ow! Ow! It don’t half hurt. Blood all over the saw. Blood all over me. Blood everywhere. Blood. Blood!

**Angela** Never mind. I’ll put the kettle on. We’ll have us a nice cup of tea.

**Donald** With four lots of sugar. Eh?

**Audrey** (*aggressively*) Are *you* Mummy, then! Why should *you* be Mummy all the time?

**Angela** ‘Course I be. I got the babby, ant I? It chunt *your* doll, Audrey.

**Audrey** Who be I, then?

**Donald** Where’s my bloody tea, Missis? Where’s my tea, then? I want my cup of tea! (*He is stamping up and down in an angry imitation of “Authority”*)

**Angela** The kettle’s just coming up to the boil, sweetie pie.

**Donald** (*with enormous deliberation*) I should bloody damn and bloody blast and bugger and bloody flaming bloody think so and all. Give us a kiss. (*He hugs himself in glee, rocking slightly*)

**Audrey** (*insistent*) Who be I then? Eh? Tell me that!

**Angela** Oh, Aud-rey!

**Audrey** I bent just going to do nothing and be nobody. It’s not fair.

**Angela** You can be my other daughter, Audrey. My naughty daughter.

**Audrey** (*stamping her foot*) No. I’m not going to be that. No!

*Donald is coming out of his trance-like reverie*

**Donald** Aw come on, Aud. Doosn’t spoil it.

**Audrey** (*hotly*) *I’m* not spoiling it.

**Donald** Yes you are. You always do. Don’t her, Angela?

*Angela crosses her arms in mimicry of adult exasperation*

**Angela** Who’d you want to be, Aud?

*Audrey’s eyes glint*

**Audrey** The nurse. I wanna be the nurse. With a little scissors.

**Donald** Oy – that’s a good ‘un. You can see to my finger. I mean, me thumb. When I’ve had my bit of tea.

**Audrey** What’s wrong with your thumb?

**Donald** Cut the bugger off, ant I? Zzzzzzz. Aaaaaagh!

*Angela tilts her nose in disapproval*

**Angela** You want to stop swearing, Donald Duck.

**Donald** (*pained*) Doosn't call I that, Angela! You promised!

**Audrey** Let me see thik thumb. I got some special stuff in my bag in my car. I'll stick'n back on.

*Angela is looking at Donald. Suddenly, as he shows Audrey his thumb:*

**Angela** Quack! Quack! Quack!

*Deeply upset, Donald jerks his hand away from Audrey*

**Donald** Angela! Don't do that!

**Audrey** Oh, dear. Oh, dear. I'll have to put some stingy stuff on that. It'll make you jump, mind.

*Donald is giving Angela anguished looks*

**Angela** (*responding*) He'll have to have his tea first, Nurse. He needs his hot cup of tea.

**Audrey** I can't wait around all day. You want to clean this place up, too. I can't wait.

**Angela** No, and I'm not letting his tea get cold neither. I'm not slaving away here all day for him to come in at all hours and think his bit of tea have got to be ready and waiting. I'm sick to death of it, I can tell you.

**Audrey** Oo, Angie. That's our mam, that is!

**Donald** (*smirking*) Hurry up. I be off up to the *bloody* pub in half a tick. To get *bloody* drunk.

**Angela** I shall wash thy mouth out with soap!

**Audrey** (*pleased*) Shall us, Angela? Shall us?

**Donald** Nine or ten pints of scrumpy, that's what I want. I've lost a lot of blood.

*Audrey grabs his thumb*

**Angela** You're not coming home stinking of drink at all hours and expect *me* to put up with it are you?

*Audrey sucks his thumb*

**Donald** (*excited*) Shut thee mouth, 'ooman. Nag, nag, nag. I'm not going to put up with it, so there.

**Audrey** (*spitting*) There. I've stopped the blood gushing out. You'll die in a minute, though. *Really* die, I mean.

**Donald** Brave, aren't I? I bent half bloody brave, mind!

*A sudden shift from Angela*

**Angela** Quack! Quack! Quack!

**Donald** Shut up!

**Audrey** Smack her one, Donald.

**Angela** Yes, and if he hits me I shall tell his mam. Her'll skin him alive, won't her, Donald Duck? Won't her? She hits you with the poker, don't she!

**Donald** Leave me alone. Leave me alone.

**Angela** Quack! Quack! Quack!

**Donald** (*screaming*) Shut up! Shut up!

*Audrey looks at Angela. Their eyes seem to flare. They join forces*

**Audrey** (*venomously*) Quack! Quack! Quack!

*Horribly, the two girls round on him*

**Donald** (*tearfully*) Please don't. Please don't. Please.

**Audrey** (*together*) Donald Duck! Donald Duck! Quack! Quack! Quack!

**Angela** Donald Duck! Quack! Quack!

(End of scene)