

Over half term all lines, lyrics and movements need to be learnt fully and understanding/reflection answers prepared. If anyone feels they would benefit from additional guidance, Miss Lizzie is available for 1to1s in person or on zoom, please email info@northlondonstars.com to arrange.

Information on the TECHNICAL and UNDERSTANDING & REFLECTION sections are below. Practice resources are online at <https://www.northlondonstars.com/exampractice>

GRADE 5

TECHNICAL SKILL - ACTING

The examiner will arrange the candidates into pairs and give each pair a scenario and characters. The examiner will also provide each candidate with a character objective to be considered during the technical skills demonstration. Each scenario is expected to last between 45 and 60 seconds. The examiner may stop the performance if the maximum time limit is exceeded. Possible scenarios are:

1. A and B witness a fight in the playground. They are called to the head-teacher in order to say what they saw. They are waiting in the corridor outside the head-teacher's office discussing what to say.
2. A and B work in the same office. A finds out that they have won £100,000 on the lottery. B congratulates A.
3. A and B are friends exploring an old, derelict house. They hear a noise coming from behind a door. A wants to investigate but B thinks they should leave.

UNDERSTANDING AND REFLECTION

Each candidate must select one question from List A and one question from List B, and present their responses to the questions as a presentation, based on our performance piece of Heathers. Independent research will be required to prepare answers.

List A:

1. What are your character's objectives in the piece?
2. Describe the place and time period in which the piece is set.
3. Describe the time period in which the piece is set, and a rehearsal process that helped to achieve the feel of the period.

List B:

1. What rehearsal processes were used to prepare vocally for either acting or singing (pick one)?
2. What rehearsal processes were used to prepare physically for dancing?
3. What rehearsal processes were used to develop your characterisation?

GRADE 6

TECHNICAL SKILL - ACTING

Candidates must perform one monologue lasting between 45 and 60 seconds. The chosen material should provide a contrast to the performance piece, differing in theme, mood, style or period. Monologues must be from a published play, or alternatively, the lyrics from a musical theatre song could be performed as a monologue. Candidates should state the play or song title, author and character's name at the start of the monologue.

UNDERSTANDING AND REFLECTION

Each candidate must select one question from List A and one question from List B, and present their responses to the questions as a presentation, based on our performance piece of Heathers. Independent research will be required to prepare answers.

List A:

1. Describe the overall style of the piece and how the style influenced your performance.
2. Critique your performance today, identifying something that went particularly well and something that could be improved upon.
3. Describe the historical context of the piece, and how it influenced your performance.

List B:

1. Describe a rehearsal process that helped achieve the style of the piece.
2. Identify and explain a technique used in rehearsal that was particularly challenging or effective, and why?
3. Describe a warm-up technique used to prepare for dancing / singing / acting (pick one), and explain why it was used.

HEATHERS THE MUSICAL FACT SHEET...

Writers: Laurence O'Keefe and Kevin Murphy,

Basis: Based on 1989 cult film, Heathers, adapted into a rock musical form.

Setting: Westerberg High School, Ohio, US

Time period: 1989

Production history: First workshopped 2009-2013 then appeared off Broadway in 2014. Appeared off West-end in 2018 and transferred to the West end that year. Currently playing at The Other Palace theatre.

Themes: As a black comedy, the underlying themes in Heathers are serious ones which affected teens and the time and still have relevance to teens today - bullying, peer pressure, sexual consent, mental illness and suicide are dealt with through the lens of dark humour.

Historical context:

The Reagan Era

Heathers was written and set in a time of conservatism in America. The president at the time, Ronald Reagan, was known for his conservative, capitalist approach, idealising a cheery, traditional and **family friendly image of America**, using slogans such as 'make America great again' and 'Morning in America'. Heathers went harshly against the grain in reaction to this idealised view of American culture, **showing a darker side** and **unapologetically showing taboo subjects**.

Popular culture

Frilly, stylish films such as The Breakfast Club and Pretty in Pink were popular at the time. Again, Heathers went totally against the norm, choosing to openly explore the taboo in a satirical manner that many at the time found uncomfortable.

MTV also came about in the 80s, giving young people exposure to music artists, fashion and pop culture more than ever before. This could be seen as **contributing to the peer pressure on teens** to fit in with the latest trends, a theme in Heathers.

Feminism and Fashion

The 1980s marked the end of the 2nd wave of feminism, where huge strides had been made in equality and women found themselves able to compete in business and other areas previously dominated by men. **'Power-dressing'** begun whereby women would wear suits and shoulder pads to show dominance in a man's world. There were many powerful women in the public eye and campaigns begun to **address sexism in media and pop culture**, gearing up for a 3rd wave of feminism. The iconic outfits, attitudes of the Heathers and themes of sexualisation of young women reflect this changing time.

Relevance now...

- **'Make America great again'** was used more recently by another president preaching conservative values. Heathers taboo rebellion becomes relevant once again.
- **'MTV era' has a second wave with the 'TikTok era'**, increasing social pressure on teens and making the themes in Heathers resonate with teens now.
- Feminism continues to push ahead. Women remain angry and want change. We want **powerful female led stories**.
- Fashion comes around again, and the **Heathers iconic style** has become sought after once more.
- **Mental health** is in the public eye, and education has improved. Themes in Heathers are now more mainstream, though the satirical style remains jarring.