

Constantin

STANISLAVSKI

Eduqus GCSE Drama

Component 1 Devising Theatre - Practitioner and Genre

Name _____

Tutor _____

Seat _____

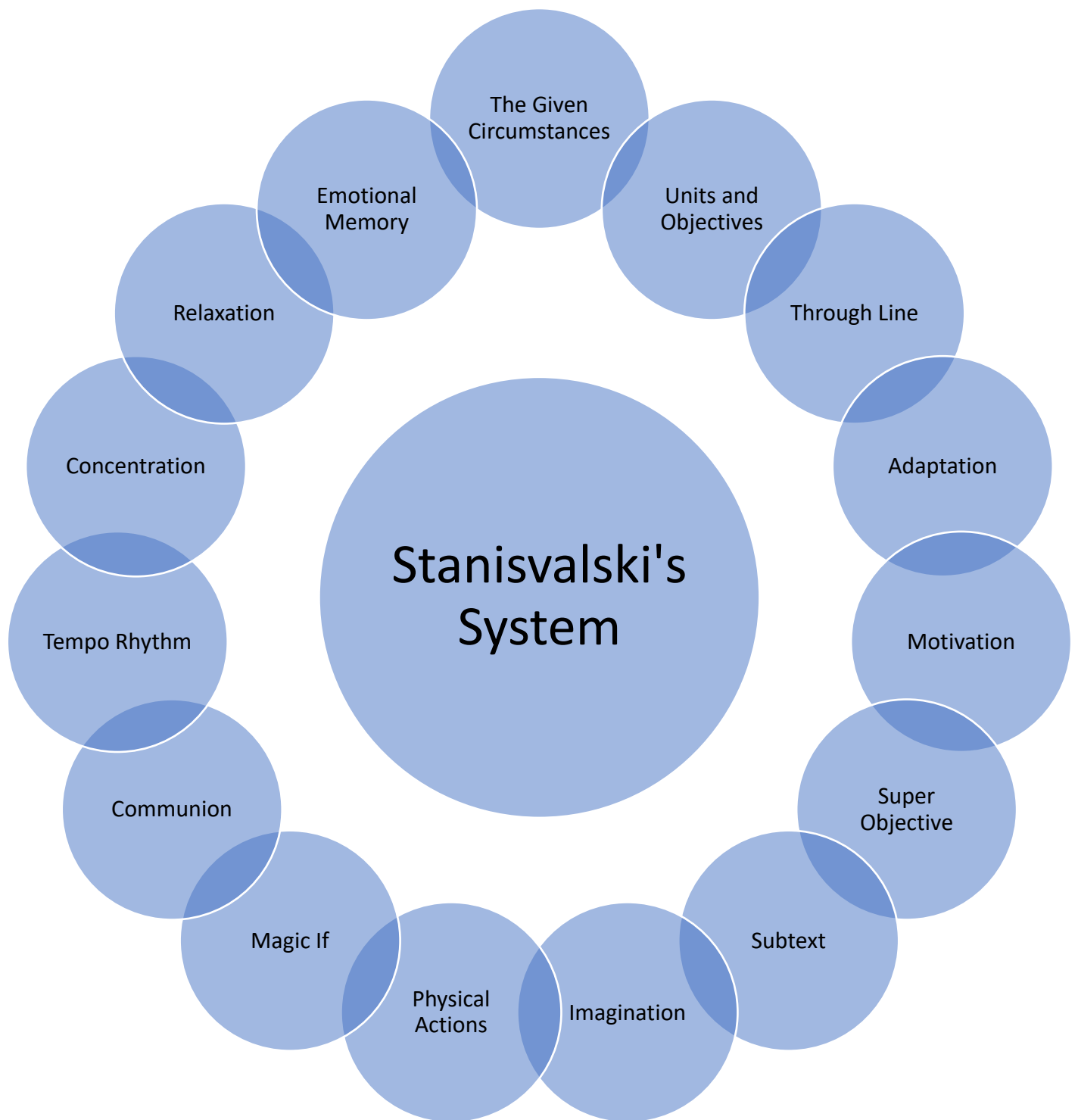
KEY FACTS

- Born in Moscow, Russia in 1863.
- Stanislavski had a privileged youth, growing up in one of the richest families in Russia, the Alekseyevs.
- He was born Konstantin Sergeyevich Alekseyev - he adopted the stage name "Stanislavski" in 1884 to keep his performance activities secret from his parents.
- Up until the communist revolution in 1917, Stanislavski often used his inherited wealth to fund his experiments in acting and directing.
- His family's discouragement meant that he appeared only as an amateur until he was thirty three.
- He was an actor and moved on to become a director and teacher.
- He wrote lots of diaries, exploring his experiences of teaching and directing in a theatre. These are called 'An Actor Prepares, Creating a Building a Character, An Actor's Work and My Life in Art.'
- He developed a new approach to acting called Naturalism
- He died in 1938, aged 75
- It took years of experimenting to get to what is now known as the Stanislavski System.
- Many actors refer to this as method acting.

STANISLAVSKI'S SYSTEM

- As an actor, Stanislavski saw a lot of bad acting - what he termed as artificial. Stanislavski wanted actors to work on characters from the inside (instead of the outside) and thus create more of a "true" or "real" (i.e. not artificial) performance.
- Stanislavski's thought process toward acting differed greatly from the way actors traditionally approached their roles.
- The Stanislavski System is an intense character development process that strives to make a performance "real" and not artificial
 - 1. It brings an actor's experiences into the role.
 - 2. It expand an actor's imagination.
- Stanislavski believed that in order to make a character true, the character must be approached from the inside. That means drawing on the real inside life of the actor, most specifically drawing on memories. The actor also has to create the inside life of the character: the character has to have inner thought, back story, beliefs, and so on, just as a real person does. When the actor answers questions about the character, they should speak in the first person. "I am..." "I want..."





QUIZ

1. When was Stanislavski born?
 - a. 1858
 - b. 1863
 - c. 1872
 - d. 1938
2. What country was he born in?
 - a. Ukraine
 - b. Germany
 - c. Russia
 - d. England
3. What did he do to help keep his interest in theatre secret?
 - a. Change his name
 - b. Move to a different country
 - c. Use a body double
 - d. Join the KGB
4. What was his family known for?
 - a. Fame
 - b. Money
 - c. Royalty
 - d. Politics
5. What age was he when he began working as a professional actor and director?
 - a. 23
 - b. 28
 - c. 33
 - d. 40
6. Which of these is NOT one of his books?
 - a. An Actor Prepares
 - b. Building a Character
 - c. Exploring the stage
 - d. Creating a Role
7. How old was he when died?
 - a. 62
 - b. 73
 - c. 75
 - d. 80
8. What is the term used for his approach to acting?
 - a. The Actors Approach
 - b. Stanislavski's System
 - c. The Naturalistic Method
 - d. An Actor's Work
9. How did Stanislavski want his actors to approach their roles?
 - a. From the beginning of the story
 - b. From inside the role
 - c. Through their motives
 - d. Through the script
10. Which of these is NOT a term used to describe part of his approach?
 - a. Emotion Memory
 - b. Given Circumstances
 - c. Magic If
 - d. Deep thoughts

Find out some new facts about Stanislavski and list them below

A DOLL'S HOUSE by Henrik Ibsen

Torvald Helmer. Nora, his wife.

ACT I

[SCENE.--A room furnished comfortably and tastefully, but not extravagantly. At the back, a door to the right leads to the entrance-hall, another to the left leads to Helmer's study. Between the doors stands a piano. In the middle of the left-hand wall is a door, and beyond it a window. Near the window are a round table, arm-chairs and a small sofa. In the right-hand wall, at the farther end, another door; and on the same side, nearer the footlights, a stove, two easy chairs and a rocking-chair; between the stove and the door, a small table. Engravings on the walls; a cabinet with china and other small objects; a small book-case with well-bound books. The floors are carpeted, and a fire burns in the stove.

It is winter, 1879. A bell rings in the hall; shortly afterwards the door is heard to open. Enter NORA, humming a tune and in high spirits. She is in outdoor dress and carries a number of parcels; these she lays on the table to the right. She leaves the outer door open after her, and through it is seen a PORTER who is carrying a Christmas Tree and a basket, which he gives to the MAID who has opened the door.]

Nora. Hide the Christmas Tree carefully, Helen. Be sure the children do not see it until this evening, when it is dressed. [To the PORTER, taking out her purse.] How much?

Porter. Sixpence.

Nora. There is a shilling. No, keep the change. [The PORTER thanks her, and goes out. NORA shuts the door. She is laughing to herself, as she takes off her hat and coat. She takes a packet of macaroons from her pocket and eats one or two; then goes cautiously to her husband's door and listens.] Yes, he is in. [Still humming, she goes to the table on the right.]

Helmer [calls out from his room]. Is that my little lark twittering out there?

Nora [busy opening some of the parcels]. Yes, it is!

Helmer. Is it my little squirrel bustling about?

Nora. Yes!

Helmer. When did my squirrel come home?

Nora. Just now. [Puts the bag of macaroons into her pocket and wipes her mouth.] Come in here, Torvald, and see what I have bought.

Helmer. Don't disturb me. [A little later, he opens the door and looks into the room, pen in hand.] Bought, did you say? All these things? Has my little spendthrift been wasting money again?

Nora. Yes but, Torvald, this year we really can let ourselves go a little. This is the first Christmas that we have not needed to economise.

Helmer. Still, you know, we can't spend money recklessly.

Nora. Yes, Torvald, we may be a wee bit more reckless now, mayn't we? Just a tiny wee bit! You are going to have a big salary and earn lots and lots of money.

Helmer. Yes, after the New Year; but then it will be a whole quarter before the salary is due.

Nora. Pooh! we can borrow until then.

Helmer. Nora! [Goes up to her and takes her playfully by the ear.] The same little featherhead! Suppose, now, that I borrowed fifty pounds today, and you spent it all in the Christmas week, and then on New Year's Eve a slate fell on my head and killed me, and--

Nora [putting her hands over his mouth]. Oh! don't say such horrid things.

Helmer. Still, suppose that happened,--what then?

Nora. If that were to happen, I don't suppose I should care whether I owed money or not.

Helmer. Yes, but what about the people who had lent it?

Nora. They? Who would bother about them? I should not know who they were.

Helmer. That is like a woman! But seriously, Nora, you know what I think about that. No debt, no borrowing. There can be no freedom or beauty about a home life that depends on borrowing and debt. We two have kept bravely on the straight road so far, and we will go on the same way for the short time longer that there need be any struggle.

Nora [moving towards the stove]. As you please, Torvald.

Helmer [following her]. Come, come, my little skylark must not droop her wings. What is this! Is my little squirrel out of temper? [Taking out his purse.] Nora, what do you think I have got here?

Nora [turning round quickly]. Money!

Helmer. There you are. [Gives her some money.] Do you think I don't know what a lot is wanted for housekeeping at Christmas-time?

Nora [counting]. Ten shillings--a pound--two pounds! Thank you, thank you, Torvald; that will keep me going for a long time.

Helmer. Indeed it must.

Nora. Yes, yes, it will. But come here and let me show you what I have bought. And all so cheap! Look, here is a new suit for Ivar, and a sword; and a horse and a trumpet for Bob; and a doll and dolly's bedstead for Emmy,--they are very plain, but anyway she will soon break them in pieces. And here are dress-lengths and handkerchiefs for the maids; old Anne ought really to have something better.

Helmer. And what is in this parcel?

Nora [crying out]. No, no! you mustn't see that until this evening.

Helmer. Very well. But now tell me, you extravagant little person, what would you like for yourself?

Nora. For myself? Oh, I am sure I don't want anything.

Helmer. Yes, but you must. Tell me something reasonable that you would particularly like to have.

Nora. No, I really can't think of anything--unless, Torvald--

Helmer. Well?

Nora [playing with his coat buttons, and without raising her eyes to his]. If you really want to give me something, you might--you might--

Helmer. Well, out with it!

Nora [speaking quickly]. You might give me money, Torvald. Only just as much as you can afford; and then one of these days I will buy something with it.

Helmer. But, Nora--

Nora. Oh, do! dear Torvald; please, please do! Then I will wrap it up in beautiful gilt paper and hang it on the Christmas Tree. Wouldn't that be fun?

Helmer. What are little people called that are always wasting money?

Nora. Spendthrifts--I know. Let us do as you suggest, Torvald, and then I shall have time to think what I am most in want of. That is a very sensible plan, isn't it?

Helmer [smiling]. Indeed it is--that is to say, if you were really to save out of the money I give you, and then really buy something for yourself. But if you spend it all on the housekeeping and any number of unnecessary things, then I merely have to pay up again.

Nora. Oh but, Torvald--

Helmer. You can't deny it, my dear little Nora. [Puts his arm round her waist.] It's a sweet little spendthrift, but she uses up a deal of money. One would hardly believe how expensive such little persons are!

Nora. It's a shame to say that. I do really save all I can.

Helmer [laughing]. That's very true,--all you can. But you can't save anything!

Nora [smiling quietly and happily]. You haven't any idea how many expenses we skylarks and squirrels have, Torvald.

Helmer. You are an odd little soul. Very like your father. You always find some new way of wheedling money out of me, and, as soon as you have got it, it seems to melt in your hands. You never know where it has gone. Still, one must take you as you are. It is in the blood; for indeed it is true that you can inherit these things, Nora.

Nora. Ah, I wish I had inherited many of papa's qualities.

Helmer. And I would not wish you to be anything but just what you are, my sweet little skylark. But, do you know, it strikes me that you are looking rather--what shall I say--rather uneasy today?

Nora. Do I?

Helmer. You do, really. Look straight at me.

Nora [looks at him]. Well?

Helmer [wagging his finger at her]. Hasn't Miss Sweet Tooth been breaking rules in town today?

Nora. No; what makes you think that?

Helmer. Hasn't she paid a visit to the confectioner's?

Nora. No, I assure you, Torvald--

Helmer. Not been nibbling sweets?

Nora. No, certainly not.

Helmer. Not even taken a bite at a macaroon or two?

Nora. No, Torvald, I assure you really--

Helmer. There, there, of course I was only joking.

Nora [going to the table on the right]. I should not think of going against your wishes.

Helmer. No, I am sure of that; besides, you gave me your word-- [Going up to her.] Keep your little Christmas secrets to yourself, my darling. They will all be revealed tonight when the Christmas Tree is lit, no doubt.

Nora. Did you remember to invite Doctor Rank?

Helmer. No. But there is no need; as a matter of course he will come to dinner with us. However, I will ask him when he comes in this morning. I have ordered some good wine. Nora, you can't think how I am looking forward to this evening.

Nora. So am I! And how the children will enjoy themselves, Torvald!

Helmer. It is splendid to feel that one has a perfectly safe appointment, and a big enough income. It's delightful to think of, isn't it?

Nora. It's wonderful!

Helmer. Do you remember last Christmas? For a full three weeks beforehand you shut yourself up every evening until long after midnight, making ornaments for the Christmas Tree, and all the other fine things that were to be a surprise to us. It was the dullest three weeks I ever spent!

Nora. I didn't find it dull.

Helmer [smiling]. But there was precious little result, Nora.

Nora. Oh, you shouldn't tease me about that again. How could I help the cat's going in and tearing everything to pieces?

Helmer. Of course you couldn't, poor little girl. You had the best of intentions to please us all, and that's the main thing. But it is a good thing that our hard times are over.

Nora. Yes, it is really wonderful.

Helmer. This time I needn't sit here and be dull all alone, and you needn't ruin your dear eyes and your pretty little hands--

Nora [clapping her hands]. No, Torvald, I needn't any longer, need I! It's wonderfully lovely to hear you say so! [Taking his arm.] Now I will tell you how I have been thinking we ought to arrange things, Torvald. As soon as Christmas is over

THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES

What are the Given Circumstances?

Read the extract from 'A Doll's House'. What are the given circumstances?

Who?

Where?

When?

What?

How?

UNITS AND OBJECTIVES

What are Units and Objectives? How are they used?

Split the previous script into units and add an annotation for each unit stating the characters' objective(s)

How many units did you split the script into? _____

What was one of the characters objectives? _____

THROUGH LINE

Through line is _____

I will use this in my rehearsals by _____

ADAPTATION

Adaptation is _____

I will use this in my rehearsals by _____

MOTIVATION

Motivation is _____

The role I am playing is _____

My character's motivation is _____

SUPER OBJECTIVE

Super objective is _____

My super objective is _____

SUBTEXT

Subtext is _____

My character's subtext is _____

I will show this by _____

IMAGINATION

Imagination is important for an actor because _____

PHYSICAL ACTIONS

Stanisvalski saw the body as an actors tool and therefore they should train and look after it

When exploring your character in ‘A Doll’s House’ list 5 ways in which you will alter how you stand, move, gesture and use facial expressions

Posture	Movement	Gesture	Facial Expressions

POSTURE



STAGE AREAS

USR Up Stage Right	US Up Stage	USL Up Stage Left
SR Stage Right	CS Centre Stage	SL Stage Left
DSR Down Stage Right	DS Down Stage	DSL Down Stage Left

Audience

GESTURES

Arms Folded	Fist Pump	Head Shrug	Scratch
Back Of Hand To	Gripping Hands	Head Tilt	Stiff
Forehead	Hand Over Mouth	Legs Crossed	Stroking Chin
Biting Nails	Hands In Pockets	Nod	Tapping Fingers
Body Shrug	Hands On Hips	Patting Hair	Thumbs Down
Chin In Hands	Hands Wide Apart	Pointing	Thumbs Up
Clasping Hands	Handshake	Raised Fist	Wave
Curtsy	Head Down	Rubbing Ear	Wink
Finger Clicking	Head In Hands	Rubbing Hands	
Finger Gun	Head Shake	Salute	

Gestures I will use

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS



Facial Expressions I will use

MAGIC IF

'Magic If' is _____

If I was in my character's situation I would _____

COMMUNION

Communion is _____

As a company we have developed Communion by _____

As characters we have shown Communion by _____

TEMPO RHYTHM

Tempo Rhythm is _____

I will use Tempo Rhythm by _____

CONCENTRATION

Concretion is important because _____

My focus on stage will be _____

RELAXATION

Concretion is important because _____

To prepare for a performance I will _____

EMOTION MEMORY

Emotion Memory is

The benefits for a performer are _____

The dangers for a performer are _____

Three examples of actors who have used emotion memory in their approach to a role

Name of Actor			
The role they played			
How they used Emotion Memory			
The effect it had on them			