

# Using Video Recording to Harness the Self-Critic for Girls' Self-Reflection of Theatre Performance

Emma, Crocombe

Putney High School, London, UK

## Abstract

The present study explored a strategy for supporting self-reflection and minimizing self-criticism among adolescent girls in the context of drama class. The teacher research worked with three groups of GCSE Drama Students, to create a self-empathy 'tool kit' from research into coping with self-criticism and negativity, in order to use the self-critic in a positive way, providing self-feedback in response to watching a practical recording of their performance work. The aim was to discover each tools' efficacy in developing the techniques of self-evaluation and harnessing the self-critic to be a positive learning tool for practical performance work. The 'Tool Kit' consisted of 3 separate self-reflective activities that would help the students evolve their negative mindsets of self-criticism and use them for positive development. Once confident with the techniques, the students applied these tools to a final monologue performance of a Shakespearean piece both in a 'work in progress' performance and the final assessed performance. The study found that students preferred a process of using a mix of peer evaluation and self-evaluation to provide a positive platform for which self-assessment could be embraced, by watching back recordings of performances. All three self-evaluative strategies were found to provide useful means of self-reflection pairing with video recordings and with the continued use of video recordings to assist with self-evaluation, anxiety around the process generally decreased.

## Introduction / The Problem Statement

The art of performance is a craft that is said to grow with experience. As a drama teacher, observations of student discomfort and self-criticism when asked to review performances back on film has always been prominent, despite encouraging them to do so as a means of fostering growth. However, even highly paid and regarded actors do not like watching their performances once they have hit the silver screen. Reese Wetherspoon told the Daily Express in 2010 "I have absolute amnesia about every movie I have ever made...I won't watch them because if I did I would spiral into a state of self-hate." Al Pacino told USA Today in 2019 about the films he stars in, "If it's good, I feel lucky. If it's not, it's something you try to forget." This last comment brings about a key question, how can you improve as a performer if you don't see the work you are creating and learn from it?

Since completing Drama Teacher Training in 2005, there has dominantly been three types of evaluation techniques in the classroom, teacher feedback, peer feedback and the third being students reflecting on their own performance through the use of recording their performance and watching it back. Working at Putney High School, an all-girls private school in South West London for the last 10 years, I have observed students making the most effective improvements when they take the time to see themselves performing and can self-reflect. However, I have also observed that this line of self-evaluation also brings out negative qualities of comments about themselves informally, either through their physical reactions at seeing themselves or verbally during the evaluative activity,

although rarely documented on any evaluative documentation accompanying the activity. Statements such as 'I hate my voice', 'What is my hair doing?' and generally squirming with embarrassment seem to dominate the initial reaction of watching a performance back rather than exploring how a character is being effectively communicated to an audience through the various vocal and physical skills developed as a student of Drama. Interestingly, these superficial focuses, linking to physical self-image, suggests that the exercise is not always used in a positive way and not as efficient a technique as it can be. Hixon and Swann (1993) claimed that even the smallest amount of reflection can develop insight into self, and it was hoped that by starting the process of self-reflection in Drama through the use of video recording would develop the students' knowledge of themselves but also knowledge of what was required within the syllabus of the Drama GCSE.

Developing these ideas in a classroom setting, it was advantageous to find some clear, simple methods that could accompany a self-reflective activity when students watch themselves back that immediately approaches the idea of being self-critical but in a positive way. Putney is an academically rigorous girl's school, and students are incredibly self-critical, striving for perfection continually rather than realising that failure or discomfort in the learning process can contribute positively to learning and development. By creating the 'Self-Reflection Toolkit', the goal was to support students to become better equipped to channel and control their self-critic tendencies, so the exercise of self-reflection through video recording is a positive, safe and empowering activity.

This Action Research Project attempted to answer the following questions:

- How effective is using video recordings to help with improvements to student performance?
- How useful are the techniques in the toolkit to help the students with their self-reflection?
- Does it make a difference if the students self-reflect as a group compared to on their own?

## **Literature Review**

Despite the benefits of self-reflection as a tool for learning and development in a theatre context, students are often reluctant for a variety of reasons, and there are already ideas of how to deal with the self-critic in different contexts that would be beneficial to be adapted for this action research project.

Gläser-Zikuda described self-reflection as a "conscious mental process" where we rely on our own thoughts to consider the development of our own ideas and performance. (2012) How using tools can help someone harness the task of 'self-evaluation' through use of written and reflective tasks, stating that the interest in 'self-reflection' is very much growing as a way of personal development and growth. This is very much how I intended to conduct the toolkit activities as a "conscious mental process". Educational companies such as The Positive Group, founded in 2011, are continuing to harness self-evaluation tools to encourage wellbeing amongst students and teachers alike and with the rise of tools specifically designed to improve the wellbeing and performance.

Roeper (1982) explores the connection between Gifted children and the Self-Critic, categorising self-critics in these instances as utilizing their time criticizing their ability and self, however, this self-criticism and high standards originating from their gifted qualities. As a Headteacher, she categorised Gifted children into subcategories, linking to high achieving and high standard setting parents as well as the sense of wanting to be treated as adults. The term Imposter Syndrome has also been linked to Self-Criticism with Clance & Imes (1987) witnessing in their research, high achieving women adulthood felt that their success was down to luck rather than their personal ability. Firestone, Firestone and Catlett (2002) also suggested that naturally we have a general unfriendly, critical view of ourselves, but reinforces that everyone's 'relationship' with their critical inner voice will vary with each individual. So, it was imperative to provide a range of self-evaluative techniques to choose from for the students to excel within the project and find 'the best fit for them'.

Studies have shown that the use of video recording equipment to improve oral presentation skills has been successful in giving the students the opportunity to self-reflect using video recording equipment has been actively encouraged as a step away from traditional teaching methods of instructor feedback with generally positive results, believing that self-evaluation by students themselves improves self-efficacy. (Tailab & Marsh, 2019, Aryadoust, 2015). It allows the students to engage further in the process in terms of self-reflection and value the assessment process of oral presentations. (Murphy & Barry, 2016) However, all of them touch upon the fact that some students found the overall experience to spark anxiety, with Aryadoust suggesting potentially the idea of modesty having an influence on students' engagement with oral presentations and self-reflection. With students responding that they would find the process nerve wracking but understood the benefits of the exercise. (Tailab & Marsh, 2019).

There was evidence to suggest that self-criticism and physical self-image are intangible, Shona Wood, of The Positive Group documented in 2019 that almost 30% of all adults have been affected by body image and appearance that it has caused feelings of being unable to cope. The Positive Group give the idea of the "Inner Coach" which links back to the idea of both peer feedback and speaking to self in the third person, what would you tell your best friend? This idea, can be adapted to a drama reflective context. Clay, Vignoles, and Dittmar (2005) theorised that attitudes toward appearance in adolescent girls was linked to comparisons to social media and would assist in the decline in self-image self-esteem. And Salomon (2017) supported this by amalgamating the idea of the comparison with social media and heightened sense of self "all of which can increase youth's vulnerability to negative body image" (Salomon, 2017; Clay, Vignoles, & Dittmar, 2005; Harter, 1999; Jones, 2001). Aryadoust (2015) proposes that students underrate themselves due to modesty or lack of confidence, but could this also have been the self-critic?

In exploring creating a toolkit for encouraging a positive response to self-evaluation, Yang, T., Chen, M. C., & Chen, S. Y. (2018) explored the idea of self-regulated learners being beneficial to student progress and Lynne N. Kennette & Nichole M. Frank explore the benefit of peer feedback as a way of developing one's own skills as well as the skills of others, their research suggests "The present study also provides some evidence that giving students the opportunity to provide peer feedback builds confidence". By having ownership on the feedback given to others, it is suggested that this would then have a positive impact on the students own learning. Sarah Peyton (2017), explored

the idea of self empathy and “Taming the Inner Critic”. In her book ‘Your Resonant Self’ she discusses the layering of self critic and the idea of stepping away from yourself, by speaking to yourself in the third person, to allow for compassion for oneself. Some of these ideas were part of the formation of the toolkit.

In summary, the toolkit that was developed required a variety of exercises that allowed the students to personally develop their techniques of ‘dealing with their inner critic’ and to encourage them to feel comfortable with watching their performances back to allow for effective and worthwhile feedback.

### **Research Context (school)**

The research was conducted with 3 groups of Year 10 Students, aged 14 – 15 years old at the beginning their GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) Drama course. They had all picked Drama GCSE as part of their four option choices additional to Maths, English and Science. The year group was very advanced academically. The cohort had an average MIDYIS (Middle Years Information System) score of 127.96, scores over 126 identify students in the top 5% nationally in the UK for ability and aptitude. Of the 28 students, 7 of them were ranked by MIDYIS to be in the top 2% of the country. Putney High School, is a selective school. With an intake every year of approximately 108 students. Many students apply to go to Oxford and Cambridge, or Russell Group universities. They are also incredibly talented sportswomen, actors and musicians. Many of the students are very busy with all the extra-curricular work they do as well as keeping on top of homework. School itself is very competitive with other GDST schools and other private schools in London. Parents have high expectations of the school and are incredibly supportive and active in their daughter’s education. All the students involved in the study, were very keen committed to the Drama course and wanting to get a Grade 8 or 9 in their GCSE results. The Drama Department results are also very strong within the school – in the 2019 results, Drama GCSE was the Highest Value Added in the School. The Component 2, the element that we are using to develop the evaluation toolkit counts for 20% of the final GCSE grade.

The Shakespeare Monologue performance was used as a test performance and source of quantitative data to reflect on the effectiveness of the ‘Self-Evaluative Toolkit’ was classified as part of the Practical Performance Component of the Pearson GCSE 2016 specification, with practical explorations of Dennis Potter’s ‘Blue Remembered Hills’ and the training in the self-evaluative tool kit. The *Performance from Text* Component in GCSE Drama includes either solo, duo or group scripted performance, and is assessed to three main components; Vocal and Physical Skills, Characterisation and Communication, and Artistic Intention and Style/Genre/Theatrical Conventions. (Edexcel, 2016)

### **The Action**

From researching, personal experience and speaking to the students themselves, it was decided that the focus would be on three key tools that would be introduced and implemented in the classroom during their first term of GCSE Drama. The introduction would be during the practical exploration of ‘Blue Remembered Hills’ by Dennis Potter and then implementation during the Shakespeare Monologue Unit.

- **Tool 1: Speaking about self in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person** – Students watch the video back first and evaluate themselves in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person – outlining strengths and weaknesses
- **Tool 2: The Positive Checklist** – Using the assessment criteria – the students will focus on 5 specific skills or techniques that they would be looking out for in their performance BEFORE they watch their performances back on video and focusing only on this checklist in order to develop targets
- **Tool 3: Peer Feedback to scaffold Self-Feedback** – Peers will give feedback to the students first outlining areas of strengths and areas for improvement – before the students then watch their performances back on video.

	Activities
LESSON 1 - 4	Introduction to GCSE Drama
LESSON 5 - 6	Introduction of Tools 1 and 2 <i>TEXT EXPLORATION: Blue Remembered Hills</i>
LESSON 7 - 8	Introduction of Tool 3 <i>TEXT EXPLORATION: Blue Remembered Hills duologues</i>
LESSON 9 - 10	Application of Evaluative Tools 1 - 3 of Duologue performances <i>TEXT EXPLORATION: Blue Remembered Hills duologues</i>
LESSON 12 - 15	Shakespeare Monologue Preparation and 'Work in Progress' performance Tools 1 – 3 given out to each teaching group (1 per group)
Two week break – Theatre Review Lessons	
LESSON 16 - 17	Final Rehearsal (Peer Directors) and Final Performance Self-Evaluation Tool of their choice

### Data Collection Plan

The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of a Self-Evaluation 'Toolkit' – the tools had been specifically created to accompany solo performances that would be recorded for the students' skill development in Drama. More specifically, the researcher was interested in determining the effectiveness of the tools in developing positive thoughts of self-evaluation and harnessing the self-critic to be a positive learning tool. This was to be through class observations, student journal reflections, surveys and interviews, in order to triangulate several data points. For the final evaluative exercise – the students had a choice of which technique they would use rather than given by the teacher. All student responses and attitude surveys were recorded using Microsoft Teams and Googleforms.

The data collection plan was as follows:

*Quantitative Data*

1. Attitude survey – Students completed a survey at the commencement and completion of the research period – specifically designed to document students’ attitudes to using video recording as a positive and effective self-evaluative tool. The second attitude survey, also questioned the efficiency of the toolkit in assisting with levels of anxiety when watching themselves back.
2. Performance Marks: Results of Shakespeare performance - Teachers completed Work in progress and Final Performance Assessment marks using the Edexcel Assessment Criteria from Component 2 - Conducted by Deborah Coulston and Evergreen Armstrong, using the Edexcel assessment criteria from Component 2.
3. Tally Observation Chart – Teachers conducted observations of practical demonstrations of embarrassment based on <https://www.americanscientist.org/article/embarrassment-a-form-of-social-pain> and [http://changingminds.org/techniques/body/emotional\\_body.htm](http://changingminds.org/techniques/body/emotional_body.htm) – conducted by Pippa Gilbert and Justyna Sokolowska. Notes were also made on anything said by the students during the exercise or in post evaluation discussions conducted by the teacher researcher.

*Qualitative Data*

1. Student journals - Students completed open ended questions documenting their thoughts on the efficiency of tools throughout the process after each key evaluative task. The main reflective journal session would be when the student have the choice to pick which tool they would like to use for their final performance.
2. Researcher observation notes completed by researcher when the students were conducting the self-evaluation exercises and in informal discussions with the students at the end of sessions of self-evaluation – to observe any general observations.

To ensure consistency in the data collection across all three classes, observers and markers would be allocated to the same groups for the duration of the research project.

	Data Collection Plan
LESSON 1	Attitude Survey 1
LESSON 4	Tally Observation 1 / Teacher Observation Notes
LESSON 5	Teacher Observation Notes
LESSON 9	Tally Observation 2
LESSON 16 - 17	Teacher Observation Notes / Student Journal

## Data Analysis

*Quantitative Data – All the Quantitative Data was compared pre and post interventions. Comparisons of ‘work in progress’ performance and the final performance 2 weeks later.*

### *Qualitative Data*

1. Student journals - Coding – Student responses were categorised to identify patterns in the responses over the 9 week period.
2. Researcher observation notes conducted by EC when the students are conducting the self-evaluation exercises – to look for any general observations. These would be documented through research coding, and observation for any general patterns that emerged in all three groups.

## Summary of Findings

### **Quantitative Data**

#### **1) Attitude survey**

*I am comfortable watching my performances back in order to develop my skills*

12% of cohort either Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed, on second attitude survey all answers were ‘Neither Agree or Disagree’ or higher to the positive responses. Students who ‘Strongly Agreed’ went up by 21% and those who ‘Agree’ up by 11%.

*I see the value of using video recordings of myself to review my skills as a performer*

Students who ‘Strongly Agree’ increased from 52% to 71%.

*Using video recordings is a good way to grow as a performer*

No students answered with ‘Disagree’ or ‘Strongly Disagree’, with a 22% rise in the ‘Strongly Agree’ in second questionnaire.

*I would be able to clearly see how to improve my performance when I watch myself back*

The increase in cohort answering ‘Agree’ or ‘Strongly Agree’ increased in the second questionnaire from 76% to 92%.

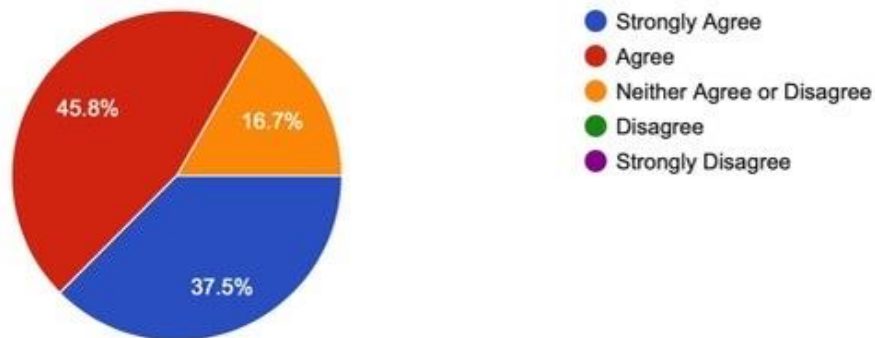
*I would take pride in watching myself perform on camera*

In the first round of questioning 12% of the cohort ‘Strongly Disagree’ with this statement and 28% of the cohort ‘Disagree’. In the second round of questioning, no student ‘Strongly Disagree’ with the statement, with 25% answer ‘Disagree’ and then other 75% of the students ‘Neither Agree or Disagree’ or ‘Agree’.

Additional Observations: When asked about whether the students would want to continue to record their practical work in light of this process 83% of the cohort marked 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree'. When asked which evaluation tool they found most helpful, Peer Feedback into Self Feedback proved most popular (65%)

**EXTRA QUESTION - I would want to continue to use my iPad to record my practical work and watch them back to evaluate my progress in my GCSE Drama course**

24 responses



## 2. Performance Marks: Results of Shakespeare performance

Taking the average of results – the marks from the 'work in progress' and the final performance went up by 25%. The work in progress and the final performance were 3 weeks apart, so consideration must be made on the students natural progression of being more confident with their lines, and they did conduct one peer directing lesson working on their piece.

## 3. Tally Observation Chart

	22/09/20 10D	13/10/20 10D	25/09/20 10B	16/10/20 10B	24/09/20 10A	15/10/20 10A
Laughing	8	1	8	3	2	2
Shaking of head					2	
Hand to face to 'cover' eyes				1	1	
Gaze away from screen	1	5	2	2	2	1
Looking at others	12	6	6	3	1	



Grimacing Face	1		2		1	
Seeking support from others	5	2	8	6		
Negative comments	3		6	2		

Additional student quoted observations included:

“I don’t like watching myself, it’s weird” (22/9/20)

“Can we delete it afterwards?” (24/9/20)

“I can’t think of two good things” (25/09/20)

“I don’t want to go through the pain of watching myself again” (15/10/20)

### Qualitative Data

#### 1. Student journals

A few highlighting quotes from the students as to why they chose the specific evaluative tool for their final self-evaluative task (Lesson 17 of the process)

#### THE POSITIVE CHECKLIST

*“Clearer structure and find it easier”*

*“I used the positive checklist over the other two evaluation techniques because I find it much easier when I have certain things to focus on. In the third person evaluation, there is too much to watch out for, and it becomes very difficult to know what to say, and to separate the different things you need to talk about. With the peer feedback, the peers might not say anything helpful, and I also think it takes away from the experience of looking at your own performance and deciding yourself what you want to work on.”*

*“Enjoy listing things”*

*“Personally, I prefer the positive checklist technique because it has worked a lot better for me. I like the way I write what I’m looking for beforehand because when I watch my performance it means that the things I’m looking for stand out a bit more whereas before I might’ve missed it and then not know what to improve on. I also think, as I said in my evaluation, I can then see if the emotions and understanding of the role really come through in my performance instead of me just thinking it does.”*

*“I chose this technique of self-evaluation because although I like peer feedback and writing in the third person, when I’m writing about myself I like having a list of things to focus on so I can see exactly what I need to improve on and*

*portray it clearly. Whereas, if it's someone else's feedback you might not know what they mean or which area they were talking about."*

### **WRITING IN THE 3<sup>RD</sup> PERSON**

*"I chose the 3<sup>rd</sup> person self-evaluation technique to evaluate my monologue because I find it easier to look at my performance through someone else's eyes and pick apart the necessary improvements and strengths. Peer feedback is helpful, but I prefer looking at my monologue myself without external influence because I can set myself good targets to improve on. A positive checklist is useful, but I find myself stuck within the boundaries of the suggested list."*

*"I chose it because I found it easier to look and evaluate myself as an outsider; to see what it would look like from someone else in the audience. I also find that evaluating myself in 3<sup>rd</sup> person follows that point even more, judging and evaluating myself from a different person's view. I like to evaluate myself as if I am not looking at me, but someone I just saw perform."*

### **PEER FEEDBACK INTO SELF FEEDBACK**

*"I always find it really difficult to try and evaluate my own performance and I feel like my evaluation is not as 'valid' as if it was given from an audience perspective even when I watch it back it is not the same as in the moment of the performance. Peer feedback is more critical as well which is effective. Personally, I find self-evaluation the hardest as I sometimes don't know what to say about my own performance because I have worked on it I know what I did when to make what effect but whether that effect was actually delivered to the audience I would never be able to know unless I was the audience at the time of performance."*

*"I chose this technique because I find it really helpful to have other people's input. I don't always look at my own work objectively so it was good to have someone else evaluate me. The person also didn't have any experience with my piece so they had a fresh take. I find talking in 3<sup>rd</sup> person confusing and I don't like the positive checklist because I feel as though I only focus on the 5 things rather than the piece as a whole. Peer evaluation helps me see what others see and what they think which, coupled with my own evaluation, hopefully makes it better."*

*"I like having feedback from someone else's view in addition so in the end I would have what I thought I did well and needed to improve whilst performing, from the audience on what I thought as an audience member and someone else's preference and taste."*

*"I chose to be peer assessed because I find it useful to be given positive areas by other people to see if I agree or if it was something I didn't notice. I find that being peer assessed makes me look out for certain*

*things that they tell me when watching my video back. I think being peer assessed because getting someone else's opinion on the piece is more helpful than just having to give your own. It also makes you want to work on the criticism because you're getting it from someone else so you don't want to do it again and have them notice it again."*

## **2. Researcher Observations – Highlights from the beginning and end of the process**

21st Sept – Group 1: Lots of looks to each other, some staying focused in the evaluative task. In feedback discussion students spoke of the value of teacher, peer and self-evaluation - students feedback that peer feedback gave a sense of camaraderie as they had all had the same experience but also developing their own skills through their feedback.

22nd Sept - Group 1: One student particularly hard on self. Interesting when working on own seemed more focused. When group having the self-deprecating. Picking out the negatives in group setting rather than individually. Mimicking each other. All the traits came out when working with each other. Be good to follow up with Maddie.

22nd Sept - Group 2: Discussion on the value of peer evaluation, having the idea of knowing what to look for and having the same experience. This group had a much more active response. Mentioned being critical when watching themselves. When student does volleyball only sees the negative. Never sees the positives.

23rd September - Group 3: Comments in group discussion - mentioned being self-critical but having the positive evaluation expectations helped. Saw the value in self-evaluation but did mention having to get over the initial responses – “Not being photogenic”. During self-evaluation task - Different reactions by different girls. Student who described herself as ‘not photogenic’ demonstrating particular embarrassment at watching back performance, hand to face and pulling face.

25<sup>th</sup> September – Group 2: Lots of reactions to watching back their performance - quite a lot of negative - but they are speaking to each other when. ‘I do that weird thing’ – “I don't want to watch myself”. In class discussion reaction of “As a solo I feel that I'm more exposed”. Student overheard saying whilst watching back the performance ‘My facial expression is so weird’, another “I can't watch myself.” One student showing another video and laughing.

1st December – Group 1: Watching back their final Shakespeare performance - everyone really focused. One student had hands to face watching themselves and another had moment of laughter but others seemed really focussed and committed to watching the piece. Really intense watching, only once had to stop a student from showing her performance to someone else. All in silence and then using their own preferred evaluation technique to create an evaluation. Got them to talk to each other about the experience some students “acting” their embarrassing moments in their video to their partner.

3rd December - Groups 3: When sitting down to watch their pieces, all were focused. Not even looking at others. A slight whisper/mouthing to each other between two students. But everyone focused on the evaluation task. Similar reaction to the last group. Everyone very focused and didn't seem fazed by watching themselves. Decided to then get girls to talk in pairs or threes about the experience of watching back. Seem much calmer talking about it - no “I hated it” interestingly the discussions seemed to be more about their actual performance, using dramatic vocab. Over heard student not enjoying writing peer feedback.

4th December - Group 2: When said going to watch back, a few smiles and looks at each other but generally good focus. Again all focused with the evaluation task, even though sitting near each other, very focused. Interestingly, this group specifically wanted the assessment criteria on the board to then work on their evaluation – so naturally was drawn to the positive checklist. One student making comments about being 'so bad', hand on face, looking for others to engage with but no-one did so ended up squirming on her own! Then focused again. Many of them looking to the assessment criteria to help their evaluation. Got them chatting in groups. Lovely hearing that after watching the performance see themselves as a different person. Lots of 'that was awkward and that was so bad' when in groups.

## **Discussion of Results**

From observing the students one of the main things that was observed was that when the students were working individually, they were focused and generally working well. However, when acknowledging each other or when they caught each other's eye that would encourage negative comments towards their performance and non-verbal communicative expressions of embarrassment. From the teacher tally observations, the physical portrayal of embarrassment definitely decreased, which could be down to a number of factors. That they are actually feeling more comfortable with the process of watching themselves back, whether the evaluative task was longer so they needed to concentrate or that they realised that they were being observed. However, there did seem to be a general pattern with all the observation tasks carried out that the more the students carried out these exercises the more comfortable they were becoming.

Certain students demonstrated particularly hard self-critical behaviour. Some mimicking of each other, when one student displayed a negative behaviour towards themselves, other followed. Following the self-evaluation exercises, discussions were conducted on the value of self-reflection. Students commented that it wasn't just Drama, some of them use video recordings for sport and all they can see is the negative, focusing on the superficial rather than championing the achievements or seeing the observations as a way to improve. One commented that by 'playing a role' on the video in Drama, this adds an extra layer of protection against their negativity. It was also interesting that one student wrote that they preferred peer feedback into self-feedback as they felt that their feedback wasn't valid.

At the start of the process, there was definitely a general feel of negativity, comments including 'Not being photogenic' 'My facial expressions are so weird', showing each other videos and laughing. When watching their final Shakespeare performances back the focus improved dramatically, there were still a few smiles or giggles, but the focus on self was much improved, with approximately 10% of each class demonstrating embarrassing behaviour. Everyone was very focused on the evaluative task, seeming confident of what they were going to answer. Interestingly, in one group for the final performance, one student tried to make eye contact to squirm and had no responses from her peers, so the reaction was suppressed. The influence of each other from these teacher observations was greatly improved. When the teacher encouraged final discussions then there were moments of saying 'well that was awkward' but the general behaviour of watching back, greatly improved.

The student reflections were also interesting in terms of why they chose which took to participate in their final self-evaluative task. Scaffolding of their viewing clearly benefitted the students and having the assessment criteria, which one group actually asked for before it was on the screen, allowed them to ground their assessment of themselves.

From the research and results that was collected, there was a positive correlation between the more used the students were to watching themselves back the easier it became and having specific tools to support this self-evaluative process gave the students the confidence to focus on the performance itself and not the superficial factors.

## **Conclusions**

From this research study, it is clear that that watching oneself is a tough process mentally, and that the external factor of having other people there watching your reaction also plays into the negative behaviours that come from it. However, with many things in life, there is an element of – the more you do something the easier it becomes. I will be continuing to implement these self-evaluative tools into my teacher moving forward. For me personally, they really allowed me to give greater gravitas to the process of self-evaluation and definitely supported the students in this process.

To develop this research further I would be very interested to look into the external factors of peer observations on a student watching themselves back. I saw many times throughout the process that the students would be fine, until they saw another person observing their work. This element of embarrassment of simply the idea of watching yourself back could potentially be linked to the self-deprecating nature of girls.

The majority of the research conducted in this project was during the Covid-19 epidemic, where schools and universities have been forced to teach online. There have been many articles and accounts on how the pandemic has affected young people's mental health and their attitudes to self. Interestingly, these three classes of Year 10 students all struggled with having their videos on during online lessons, and those who 'were brave enough' again showed signs of embarrassment and I am so grateful to them for stepping out of their comfort zone to have a face to teach to. Studies have begun to surface on the influence of the pandemic on self esteem. González-Valero, G., Zurita-Ortega, Lindell-Postigo, Conde-Pipó, Grosz & Badicu. (2020) look at the impact of the pandemic on self-concept and the influence of sport activities on adolescences. The Guardian released an article in Feb 2021 stating that the rise in eating disorders in teenagers has increased dramatically with doctors warning of a 'tsunami' of cases in light of the pandemic. March (2021). In light of these and many more articles, the process of supporting and guiding students with a simple, yet effective toolkit in their self-evaluation and harnessing that self-critic for practical performances is more important than ever.

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## Appendices 1

### Assessment criteria for performers – Component 2 (Edexcel 2016)

Level	Mark	Descriptor (AO2) Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance (performers) Vocal and physical skills
Level 1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vocal skills are underdeveloped, demonstrating limited understanding of how creative choices communicate meaning to the audience. Vocal delivery is often inappropriate and inconsistent.</li> <li>● Basic technical control in the use of vocal techniques (clarity, pace, inflection, pitch, projection). Vocal performance lacks variation and range.</li> <li>● Physical skills are underdeveloped, demonstrating limited understanding of how creative choices communicate meaning to the audience. Physical delivery is often inappropriate and inconsistent.</li> <li>● Basic technical control in the use of physical techniques (gesture, facial expression, stillness, stance, contact, use of space and spatial relationships). Physical performance lacks variation and range.</li> </ul>
Level 2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vocal skills are sound, demonstrating an adequate understanding of how creative choices communicate meaning to the audience. Vocal delivery is generally appropriate and consistent.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound technical control in the use of vocal techniques (clarity, pace, inflection, pitch, projection). Vocal performance shows general variation and range.</li> <li>• Physical skills are sound, demonstrating an adequate understanding of how creative choices communicate meaning to the audience. Physical delivery is generally appropriate and consistent.</li> <li>• Sound technical control in the use of physical techniques (gesture, facial expression, stillness, stance, contact, use of space and spatial relationships). Physical performance shows general variation and range.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocal skills are secure, demonstrating an effective understanding of how creative choices communicate meaning to the audience. Vocal delivery is appropriate and consistent throughout.</li> <li>• Secure technical control in the use of vocal techniques (clarity, pace, inflection, pitch, projection). Vocal performance shows competent variation and range.</li> <li>• Physical skills are secure, demonstrating an effective understanding of how creative choices communicate meaning to the audience. Physical delivery is appropriate and consistent throughout.</li> <li>• Secure technical control in the use of physical techniques (gesture, facial expression, stillness, stance, contact, use of space and spatial relationships). Physical performance shows competent variation and range.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4</b>	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocal skills are assured, demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of how creative choices communicate meaning to the audience. Vocal delivery is engaging and dynamic throughout.</li> <li>• Accomplished technical control in the use of vocal techniques (clarity, pace, inflection, pitch, projection). Vocal performance shows comprehensive variation and range.</li> <li>• Physical skills are assured, demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of how creative choices communicate meaning to the audience. Physical delivery is engaging and dynamic throughout.</li> <li>• Accomplished technical control in the use of physical techniques (gesture, facial expression, stillness, stance, contact, use of space and spatial relationships). Physical performance shows comprehensive variation and range.</li> </ul>

<b>Level</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Descriptor (AO2) Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance (performers) Characterisation and communication</b>
<b>Level 1</b>	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characterisation demonstrates basic understanding of the role and its context within the performance.</li> <li>• Characterisation is uneven and lacks clarity, with obvious lapses in focus and confidence.</li> <li>• Limited rapport and communication with audience/other performers.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characterisation demonstrates a sound understanding of the role and its context within the performance.</li> <li>• Characterisation is generally consistent and sound, demonstrating adequate focus and confidence.</li> <li>• Sound rapport and communication with audience/other performers.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characterisation demonstrates a secure understanding of the role and its context within the performance.</li> <li>• Characterisation is consistent and secure, demonstrating effective focus and confidence.</li> <li>• Effective rapport and communication with audience/other performers.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4</b>	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characterisation demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the role and its context within the performance.</li> <li>• Characterisation is accomplished, skilful and highly engaging, demonstrating comprehensive and assured focus, confidence and commitment.</li> <li>• Assured rapport and communication with audience/other performers.</li> </ul>

<b>Level</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Descriptor (AO2) Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance (performers) Artistic intention and style/genre/theatrical conventions</b>
<b>Level 1</b>	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic contribution to the realisation of the artistic intention in performance.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance demonstrates limited control and understanding in relation to style, genre and theatrical conventions.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a basic interpretation of the text in performance.</li> <li>• Individual performance is undeveloped and has limited impact, lacking energy and ease.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear contribution to the realisation of the artistic intention in performance.</li> <li>• Performance demonstrates clear control and understanding in relation to style, genre and theatrical conventions.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a coherent interpretation of the text in performance.</li> <li>• Individual performance is generally developed and has clear impact, showing emerging energy and ease.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>	5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective contribution to the realisation of the artistic intention in performance.</li> <li>• Performance demonstrates secure control and understanding in relation to style, genre and theatrical conventions.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a convincing and sustained interpretation of the text in performance.</li> <li>• Individual performance is developed, thoughtful and sympathetic, creating effective impact and showing sustained energy and ease.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4</b>	7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assured contribution to the realisation of the artistic intention in performance.</li> <li>• Performance demonstrates assured and sustained control and understanding in relation to style, genre and theatrical conventions.</li> <li>• Demonstrates an accomplished and comprehensive interpretation of the text in performance.</li> <li>• Individual performance is refined, articulate and dynamic, creating significant impact with ability to drive the piece, showing accomplished energy and ease.</li> </ul>

## Appendices 2

### Work in Progress Marks and Final Performance Marks

Group 10A

MARKER: Debbie Coulston

#### Summary of Findings

Name	V/M	V/M	Cha/Com	Cha/Com	Art Int / S & G	Art Int / S & G	Total	Total
Student 1	4	5	3	6	3	5	10	16
Student 2	5	6	5	7	5	7	15	20
Student 3	4	7	5	7	5	7	14	21
Student 4	6	6	5	7	6	7	17	20
Student 5	3	3	4	4	3	3	10	10
Student 6	5	6	5	7	6	6	16	19
Student 7	5	6	5	7	5	7	15	20
Student 8	6	6	6	7	5	6	17	19
Student 9	6	7	6	7	5	6	17	20

Group 10B

MARKER: Evergreen Armstrong

Name	V/M	V/M	Cha/Com	Cha/Com	Art Int / S & G	Art Int / S & G	Total	Total

Student 10	4	3	5	4	5	3	14	10
Student 11	6	5	6	6	6	5	18	16
Student 12	4	7	5	7	5	7	14	21
Student 13	5	6	5	7	5	6	15	19
Student 14	5	5	6	7	6	6	17	18
Student 15	6	8	6	7	6	8	18	23
Student 16	4	4	4	5	5	4	13	13
Student 17	4	5	3	5	3	5	10	15
Student 18	3	4	4	5	4	4	11	13
Student 19	5	7	6	8	6	8	17	23
Student 20	5	7	5	8	5	8	15	23

Group 10D

MARKER: Evergreen Armstrong

Name	V/M	V/M	Cha/Com	Cha/Com	Art Int / S & G	Art Int/S & G	Total	Total
Student 21	3	6	3	6	4	7	10	19
Student 22	5	6	4	7	5	7	14	20
Student 23	6	8	6	8	6	8	18	24
Student 24	5	5	6	5	6	4	17	14
Student 25	4	6	5	7	4	7	13	20
Student 26	3	4	4	5	4	5	11	14
Student 27	3	4	4	4	3	5	10	13
Student 28	4	5	6	6	5	6	15	17