



POLKA

Where Theatre Begins

Producing
KS4 & KS5

What Does a Producing Department Do?

The Producing Department at Polka Theatre is in charge organising and coordinating the productions that play in our theatres.

This includes...



What Does a Producing Department Do?

- Choosing and commissioning plays
- Obtaining rights to adapt books
- Hiring freelancers such as directors and actors
- Managing budgets and creating schedules
- Working with other theatres and companies on co-productions
- Working on R&Ds to develop new shows
- Attending festivals and other shows
- Working with early career artists to develop their practice



Making Our Work Age-Appropriate

As Polka is a children's theatre, it's really important for the Producing Department to ensure that all of our shows are suitable for young audiences.



Making Our Work Age-Appropriate

For example, shows for babies and toddlers need to be short, with opportunities to touch and play with tactile objects.

Shows for older children can be longer, but should still use different elements such as music, movement and relatable themes to capture the audience's attention.



Over to You!

Sometimes scripts need to be edited to suit the desired age range - and you're going to have a go at doing this!



Choose Your Age Range

Take a short piece of a script - it can be something you've created yourself, or a play you've read or seen recently.

Next, choose the age group you want to adapt for. Think about the people you know - are there any young children in your family or community? Adapting for their age range will be easier, as you can consider their interests.



Editing Your Script

Now, take a look at your script:

- Are there any themes in this piece that may be inappropriate or uninteresting for a young audience? How can you change or adapt them?
- Is there any language that may be hard for your audience to follow? For example, lengthy monologues explaining the plot may not be appropriate for a 5-year-old! Can you change these or replace them with action?
- Are there any points in the script that you can speak directly to- or interact with your audience?



Staging Your Work

Let's get your play on its feet:

- How can you use sound to grab a child's attention? Music and songs can be a great way to engage children.
- How can you adapt your voice and gestures to suit an audience of children? For example, shouting really loud can be scary for very small children, but being a little larger-than-life can help grab an older child's attention.





Performance Time!

Share your work with your class.
What changes have been made?

Hear from the Professional

Helen Matravers - Artistic Director / Joint CEO

Describe your job in one sentence.

I decide what artistic activity should happen at Polka, and help artists to make theatre and develop their practice, whilst co-overseeing how Polka needs to function as a business too!

What are the top three skills you need for your job?

Energy, Empathy and Clarity.

Are there any specific qualifications or experience you need to be able to do your job?

No, but I would strongly recommend to anyone wanting to head into this kind of role to spend time working in every role, department or discipline in theatre – having a very well-rounded knowledge of what each role takes is incredibly helpful and important. Oh and see as much theatre as you can, of all different kinds, by all different artists, in all different spaces. Go and see things you don't think you'll like, too. Read lots of plays!

What is your favourite part of your job?

Watching previews with children in the audience.

Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for a young person hoping to pursue a career in your field?

Try everything and don't be afraid to make mistakes. Making any kind of art is brave and should be applauded. Stay an extra hour and see how that thing that you've never seen or done before, gets done. Be super inquisitive and always put yourself in the shoes of the person who is being most vulnerable in the artistic process. Give back if someone has given to you.





Want to learn more about careers in theatre?

Head to polkatheatre.com to find out about Work Experience.