

Advice Sheet: Top-tips for Memorisation

Pathway:	Speech to Perform
Assessment Section:	Section 2/3: Performing a Published Work/Performing a Self-Composition
Advice:	<p>The first, and most important task is to understand the piece. Check any words you're not sure of, in terms of sense or pronunciation, and read and re-read the piece – <u>several</u> times - until you're satisfied that you have internalised the meaning. <i>Now</i> you can begin to learn it.</p> <p>We know how difficult it can be to fully memorise a piece. However, once you have memorised it, the fun can begin in terms of layering it with different paces, pitches and tones. In effect, memorising the words is the first step to giving a unique interpretation of the piece that will impress and capture the imagination of an audience.</p> <p>So, here are our top five tips for memorisation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking the piece one line at a time, speak each line six times, before adding the next line and repeating the extended section six times. Using the example of the poem <i>He Gets Up in Dark Dawn</i> by Ted Hughes: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>He gets up in dark dawn</i> (repeat X6)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>He gets up in dark dawn</i> <i>To misted stillness</i> (repeat X6)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>He gets up in dark dawn</i> <i>To misted stillness.</i> <i>First thrush splutters and chips at the thick light</i> (repeat X6)</p> 2. Read the piece through a number of times. After, turn the paper over, and see how much of it you can accurately write out before you have to remind yourself of the words. Each time you have to check the words, start writing the piece out from the beginning again. 3. Using a phone or Dictaphone, make an audio recording of yourself accurately reading the piece with expression and pause. Copy the piece to an audio file and replay the piece through headphones, speaking the words along with the file. Go back to the beginning each time you make an error. 4. Using a phone or Dictaphone, make an audio recording of yourself accurately reading the piece with expression and pause. Copy the file multiple times and listen to the audio at every opportunity – even when you go to sleep!

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6. 'Storyboarding' your piece. Draw up a grid and take the piece in chunks, drawing pictures of each element, with the words above it. Here is an example, using the sonnet Ozymandias, by Percy Bysshe Shelley. When you have finished your storyboard, try delivering it (or acting it out) in front of friends and family as a way to establish it in your memory. The more you practice, the more you will remember!

