

**DNA - CHARACTERS**

**The inner circle**

- Phil:** The silent and cold leader of the group, Phil is calmly in control. He rarely speaks at the start of the play but orchestrates the entire cover-up. He is ruthlessly logical and detached from the emotional panic of his friends.
- Leah:** Phil's chatty girlfriend, Leah is an intelligent and moral character who serves as the group's conscience. She talks constantly, questioning their actions and trying to make sense of what has happened, but her ideas are ignored by Phil.
- John Tate:** The group's initial leader, who loses control after Adam's "death". He is insecure and tries to maintain power through fear and threats. He eventually cracks under the pressure and disappears from the group.
- Cathy:** Cold and sadistic, Cathy finds the events exciting and is eager to impress Phil. She is a frightening and violent character who takes charge towards the end of the play, even carrying out the murder of Adam.

**The followers**

- Mark and Jan:** These two are always together and act as a kind of Greek chorus, narrating events and filling in details for the audience. They are complicit in the bullying of Adam but try to justify their actions.
- Danny:** An ambitious and studious character, Danny is worried about how the crime will affect his future as an aspiring dentist. He is passive and mostly follows orders to protect his own future.
- Richard:** A higher-status member of the group who initially challenges John Tate's leadership. However, he becomes anxious and helpless when things go wrong and eventually follows Phil and then Cathy.
- Lou:** A pessimistic and fearful character, Lou worries that the group will get caught. She is easily influenced by others and follows whoever is in charge.
- Brian:** The weakest and most emotionally fragile member of the group. He is easily bullied and tormented, and the trauma of the cover-up eventually leads to a mental breakdown.

**The victim**

- Adam:** The bullied and vulnerable teenage boy who was desperate to be accepted by the group. He is presumed dead for most of the play, only to reappear later disoriented and confused, leading to his eventual murder by the group to protect their secret

**STANISLAVSKI**

Stanislavski developed a system of acting to help performers create truthful and believable characters by connecting with their inner emotions, motivations, and imagination.

**Emotional memory**

Actors recall a personal experience to tap into genuine emotions that are similar to those required for a scene.

**Objectives**

The specific goals or desires that drive a character's actions and speeches in a scene.

**Given circumstances**

The background information from the script—the "who, what, where, when, and why"—that helps shape the character's personality.

**The Magic "If"**

Actors ask themselves, "What would I do if I were in my character's situation?" to find truthful reactions.



**DNA BY DENNIS KELLY**

**DNA** is about a group of teenagers who panic and cover up the accidental death of one of their classmates, Adam, after a bullying incident goes wrong. Led by the quietly manipulative Phil, the group's actions spiral into a much darker situation as they frame an innocent man and, ultimately, commit another terrible crime to protect their secret.

**Key plot points**

- The accident:** The play begins after a group of teenagers, led by John Tate, have been bullying Adam, an unpopular boy who wanted to be part of their gang. During a "prank," Adam falls into a mineshaft, and the group assumes he is dead.
- The cover-up plan:** The original leader, John Tate, panics and loses control. The silent and calm Phil then takes charge. He coldly devises an intricate plan to frame a postman for Adam's disappearance, using false DNA evidence planted by Cathy to make the story believable.
- Growing pressure:** As the police investigate and the innocent man is arrested, the group starts to crack under the pressure and guilt. One member, Brian, becomes especially distressed, while Phil's girlfriend, Leah, struggles with her conscience and the group's cruel actions.
- Adam's return:** In a shocking turn, the group discovers Adam is alive, though disoriented and suffering from a head wound. Adam has been living alone in the woods and has no memory of what happened.
- A final, fatal act:** Faced with the possibility of being exposed, Phil orders the group to kill Adam for real. Cathy carries out the murder, cementing their crime.
- The aftermath:** The play ends sometime later, showing the group has fallen apart. John Tate has found religion, Brian is mentally unwell, and Phil and Leah have separated. The play concludes with a final image of Phil sitting silently, reflecting the complete disintegration of the group.

**YEAR 9 Drama KO TERM 2.2**  
**‘STANISLAVSKI AND DNA’**