

YOUNG PERFORMERS CERTIFICATES

Face-to-face and digital
exam formats

Syllabus specifications
from April 2021



KEEP UP TO DATE

Please check trinitycollege.com/young-performers to make sure you are using the current version of the syllabus specifications and for the latest information about the assessments.

Trinity accepts entries for its exams on the condition that candidates conform to the requirements of the appropriate syllabus. Any amendments to the requirements will be published and advertised via our website.

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Digital formats**

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Welcome

Welcome to Trinity College London's syllabus specifications for the Young Performers Certificates. These assessments are taken in groups of 6 to 12 performers and are designed to develop confidence, group interaction skills and a sense of achievement in children up to the age of seven. We do not prescribe the content of the performance tasks in the assessments, which allows teachers and candidates to choose pieces they have a particular interest in or that complement their studies and/or teaching.

These specifications outline the core information that teachers and candidates need to prepare and enter for the assessments.

HOW TO ENTER FOR THE YOUNG PERFORMERS CERTIFICATES

The Young Performers Certificates have been designed to support teaching, learning and assessment through both face-to-face and digital mediums, offering even more choice in how the qualifications can be achieved. This flexibility means that teachers can:

- ▶ Choose their preferred assessment medium and get feedback from a drama specialist
- ▶ Enter for assessments individually when they are ready
- ▶ Access assessments in a location convenient to them, particularly if they do not live near a physical centre
- ▶ Develop their skills through preparing and responding to tasks with a progression framework

Both mediums are assessed to the same standards and all candidates entered receive a certificate.

For details on how to enter for Face-to-face and Digital assessments go to trinitycollege.com/drama-entry

ABOUT TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

Trinity College London, established in 1872, is a leading internationally recognised awarding organisation, publisher and independent education charity that has been providing assessments around the world since 1877. We specialise in the assessment of communicative and performance skills covering music, drama, combined arts and English language. With over 850,000 candidates a year in more than 60 countries worldwide, Trinity qualifications are specifically designed to help students progress. Our aim is to inspire teachers and learners through the creation of assessments that are enjoyable to prepare for, rewarding to teach and that develop the skills needed in real life.

At the heart of Trinity's work is the belief that effective communicative and performance skills are life enhancing, know no boundaries and should be within reach of us all. We exist to promote and foster the best possible communicative and performance skills through assessment, content and training that is innovative, personal and authentic.

WHY CHOOSE TRINITY?

Teachers and students choose Trinity because:

- ▶ We understand the transformative power of performance
- ▶ Our qualifications help ensure candidates make progress by providing carefully levelled stepping stones that build confidence and enjoyment while continuing to extend and challenge
- ▶ We aim to design assessments that have a positive impact on student learning, engagement and achievement
- ▶ We encourage candidates to bring their own choices and interests into our exams – this motivates students and makes the assessment more relevant and enjoyable
- ▶ Our flexible exams and assessments give candidates the opportunity to perform to their strengths and interests
- ▶ Our qualifications are accessible to candidates of all ages and from all cultures
- ▶ Our highly qualified and friendly examiners are trained to put candidates at their ease and provide maximum encouragement.

Introduction to Young Performers Certificates

OBJECTIVE OF THE CERTIFICATES

Trinity's Young Performers Certificates are designed to encourage young children to develop performance, musical and communication skills as they create and explore stories, songs, roles and situations through the imaginative and integrated use of movement, music, voice and artwork.

Working towards these certificates encourages teamwork, turn-taking, sharing, speaking and listening, memorisation and imaginative engagement.

LEVELS OF THE CERTIFICATES

To encourage participation and provide a sense of progression, the certificates are available at three levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold.

WHO THE YOUNG PERFORMERS CERTIFICATES ARE FOR

The Young Performers Certificates are for groups of 6 to 12 performers. Although there is a natural progression through the certificates, from Bronze to Silver and on to Gold, groups can be entered at any of the levels.

Age of candidates

The Young Performers Certificates have been designed for children up to the age of 7. Three levels of assessment support teachers in taking structured steps towards achievement that reflect the age and ability of the children, building on understanding and complexity at each level:

Bronze (suitable for children age 3-5)

Silver (suitable for children age 4-6)

Gold (suitable for children age 5-7)

However, because of the certificates' focus on encouraging participation and building confidence, teachers may also find these certificates useful as a development experience for older children.

Trinity is committed to making its assessments accessible to all and each candidate is treated individually when considering how assessments can be adapted for those with special needs. Find out more at trinitycollege.com/drama-csn

ATTAINMENT LEVELS

The Young Performers Certificates are awards, not exams. The intention is to promote good classroom practice through co-operation and creativity, developing an appropriate child-centred introduction to performance. As such, all participants receive a pass.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPECTATIONS FOR THE YOUNG PERFORMERS CERTIFICATES

The Young Performers Certificates are conducted in English. They assess how candidates use language as a tool for communicating and performing in particular contexts, rather than assessing the fluency of the language itself.

Candidates' use of English must be intelligible to the examiner, although they are not required to conform linguistically to any particular model of pronunciation or usage.

WHERE THE YOUNG PERFORMERS CERTIFICATES COULD LEAD

The Trinity Young Performers Certificates offer progression routes towards solo, pair and group graded exams in drama and communication skills.

HOW TO ENTER

Guidance and details on how to enter the awards covered in this document can be found at trinitycollege.com/young-performers

Introduction to the assessments

FORMAT OF THE PERFORMANCE

The performers present a short group performance which takes the form of one of the following:

- ▶ A story
- ▶ A nursery rhyme
- ▶ A poem
- ▶ A myth, folk or fairy story
- ▶ A song
- ▶ A musical work.

The teacher should be present throughout and may lead or direct the performance.

GROUP SIZE

Groups consist of 6 to 12 performers.

WHICH LEVEL?

This table provides teachers with an overview of the expectations at each level.

SKILLS USED IN PERFORMANCE

Within the performance the performers can use a variety of performance, musical and communication skills, for example:

- ▶ Speaking poetry or prose
- ▶ Dramatic expression
- ▶ Singing
- ▶ Playing a musical instrument(s)
- ▶ Expressive movement
- ▶ Mime
- ▶ Use of costume, props, masks
- ▶ Use of puppets.

| CERTIFICATE LEVEL | EXPECTATIONS SPECIFIC TO THE LEVEL | EXPECTATIONS COMMON TO ALL LEVELS | TEACHER INVOLVEMENT |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
| Bronze | The work presented should have a form and structure with which the children are familiar. There will be some group dynamic. | At all levels, examiners will expect to see the performers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Working co-operatively ▶ Using a range of basic performance skills to convey a sense of mood and/or narrative ▶ Responding appropriately to teacher direction and support | The teacher should lead the presentation. |
| Silver | There should be a group dynamic and some emphasis on individual responsibility. All group members should be given the opportunity to display some independence and confidence through individual, pair or small group contributions. | | The teacher should support the presentation. |
| Gold | There should be a group dynamic and an emphasis on individual responsibility. All group members should be given the opportunity to display some independence and confidence through individual, pair or small group contributions. | | The teacher should direct the presentation discreetly. |

Assessment requirements: Young Performers Certificates

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

While there are no formal assessment criteria for the Young Performers Certificates, at each level the examiner would normally expect to see the participants:

- ▶ Working co-operatively
- ▶ Using a range of basic performance skills to convey a sense of mood and/or narrative
- ▶ Responding appropriately to teacher direction and support.

The emphasis throughout is on each child's participation at an appropriate level and their enjoyment.

For further guidance on expectations at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels and examples of material that could be used in the performances, see pages 8-9.

BRONZE CERTIFICATE

AIM: This certificate allows children to take their first steps in exploring performance, musical and communication skills in a familiar and supportive atmosphere.

GUIDANCE ON EXPECTATIONS: The work presented should emerge out of child-centred play or group activities and have a form and structure with which the children are familiar. The focus is on a developing group dynamic and the performers demonstrating basic performance skills. See page 8 for further guidance.

| TASK REQUIREMENTS | FURTHER INFORMATION | DURATION |
|--|--|-------------|
| <p>The performers give a group-based presentation integrating TWO OR MORE skills.</p> <p>The presentation should be teacher led.</p> <p>A programme should be provided either on the day of the assessment in Face-to-face assessments or with the video of the performance for Digital assessments. The programme should list the full names of the performers and the roles they are performing.</p> | <p>There should be some basic narrative to focus and progress the piece.</p> <p>See page 5 for details of the skills that can be used.</p> | 5-8 minutes |

SILVER CERTIFICATE

AIM: This certificate allows children to continue to develop their performance skills in a mutually supportive atmosphere, while allowing individuals to make their own contributions to the group presentation.

GUIDANCE ON EXPECTATIONS: In addition to a focus on group dynamic, there is an emphasis on encouraging individual responsibility. Performers may now make their own contributions to the group as a whole. This might be through movement, performing a role in the story, singing a song or playing a musical instrument. See page 9 for further guidance.

| TASK REQUIREMENTS | FURTHER INFORMATION | DURATION |
|--|--|--------------|
| <p>The performers give a group-based presentation integrating TWO OR THREE skills with individual/pair/small group contributions.</p> <p>The presentation should be teacher supported.</p> <p>A programme should be provided either on the day of the assessment in Face-to-face assessments or with the video of the performance for Digital assessments. The programme should list the full names of the performers and the roles they are performing.</p> | <p>There should be inclusion of a range of characters, moods and situations which encourage a variety of individual and group responses. The narrative structure should be clear and have an appropriate ending.</p> <p>See page 5 for details of the skills that can be used.</p> | 8-12 minutes |

GOLD CERTIFICATE

AIM: This certificate allows children to continue to develop their performance skills, encouraging them to make independent contributions to the work presented. This certificate could additionally provide a foundation into Initial level solo, pair and group assessments.

GUIDANCE ON EXPECTATIONS: In addition to a focus on group dynamic, there is an emphasis on encouraging individual responsibility. Performers should now be seen to be making their own contributions to the group as a whole. This might be through movement, performing a role in the story, singing a song or playing a musical instrument. See page 9 for further guidance.

| TASK REQUIREMENTS | FURTHER INFORMATION | DURATION |
|---|--|----------------------|
| <p>The performers give a group-based presentation integrating THREE OR MORE skills with individual/pair/small group contributions.</p> <p>The teacher may discreetly direct the performance.</p> <p>A programme should be provided either on the day of the assessment in Face-to-face assessments or with the video of the performance in Digital assessments. The programme should list the full names of the performers and the roles they are performing.</p> | <p>The work presented should be clearly structured, contain identifiable characters, and demonstrate contrasting moods and dynamics within an imagined storyline or situation. The narrative structure should be clear and have an appropriate ending.</p> <p>See page 5 for details of the skills that can be used.</p> | <p>10-15 minutes</p> |

Guidance

INTRODUCTION

The Young Performers Certificates are designed to encourage young children to develop performance, musical and communication skills as they create and explore stories.

Teachers in early years schools will already be exploring stories and language with children, so preparing for the Young Performers Certificates is simply an extension of existing teacher/learning outcomes, with the added focus of a specific performance to work towards.

Creative work towards the Young Performers Certificates is largely open-ended. The assessment is an opportunity to showcase exploratory pathways into a story, nursery rhyme, myth, song or a musical work.

Preparation for the assessment can take place over a term or longer, depending on the needs of the children. The integration of artwork, design, simple costume, games, music, movement and dance with the spoken word gives an opportunity to explore creatively, in ways that suit both the children's needs and the teacher's strengths.

The presentation will benefit from some structure. This allows children to understand sequence while participating in sharing the chosen theme or narrative.

BRONZE CERTIFICATE

The Bronze Certificate provides young children with the opportunity to take their first steps in exploring performance, musical and communication skills.

For this certificate the performers give a teacher-led group presentation of a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 8 minutes in duration that integrates two or more skills. The work presented should emerge out of child-centred play or group activities. Teachers are free to make their own choice of topic, and could choose a story, nursery rhyme or song, ensuring it is age appropriate, relatable and inspires the children.

For the Bronze Certificate, it can be helpful if the teachers participate in the narration to support the young performers. Furthermore, giving the children an opportunity to speak either individually or as a group will increase their confidence when giving the presentation.

The source material can be linked to other subject areas to enhance learning. For example, the presentation could be based on a cross-curricular theme of colour. It could include the song '*I Can Sing A Rainbow*', and Colin West's poem '*My Colours*'. Artwork and costumes could be used to create a rainbow of colour, and the teacher could explore which emotions can be linked to each colour and how that makes the children move or use their facial expressions (eg yellow – happy and sunny; grey – sad and cold; red – hot and angry).

Another starting point could be a well-known tale such as *The Hare and the Tortoise*. Once familiar with the story, children could explore speed and the physicality of the animals through games and do some contrasting voice work ('ready steady go', cheering at the finish line, dozing and snoring in the sun). There are numerous children's songs about running, or teachers may choose to adapt a well-known tune with words of their own to suit the story or create a slow-motion race to a piece of music. The performance could be enhanced with simple costumes, ears and tail for the hare, a shell for the tortoise, etc.

SILVER CERTIFICATE

Children at this stage are gaining confidence in sharing their work with others, and teachers should enable the group to take more responsibility for the storytelling themselves. Group dynamic is important, and in addition to this there is an emphasis on encouraging individual as well as group responsibility. Children should now be encouraged to make their own individual, pair or small group contributions to the performance as a whole.

For this certificate the performers give a teacher-supported group presentation of a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 minutes in duration. The teacher can assist with some narration or prompting. As with the Bronze Certificate, the presentation should emerge from child-centred play and drama games and show two or three presentation skills (voice, movement, mime, song, artwork, etc).

Teachers could use themes taken from their curriculum for the performance. For example, if the theme for the term is life cycles, teachers may look at a book such as *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle to give narrative structure to the presentation. The teacher could start with music and movement work exploring how it feels to be blown about in the wind. This might then be linked to music or sound effects (either vocal or recorded) and creating interesting staging for the audience. The story includes many references to different environments, giving opportunities for the performers to explore imaginatively how they feel (eg hot, cold). Confident solo performers could play individual seeds, the bird, the mouse, the children, etc. There are opportunities to explore colour and shape in artwork (oceans, deserts etc) and create simple masks or stick puppets to show the seeds swirling in the wind, or play parachute games to create the sea. Songs may be included to explore the ideas further – perhaps a song about the wind, or a nursery rhyme about plants growing. If the children have been growing seeds over the term, these could be displayed and used as a simple ‘set’ so that both children and audience make the connection to the cross-curricular work.

At this age, there may be some children who have the confidence to take on some of the narration, and those less confident can join in with choral speaking and singing.

GOLD CERTIFICATE

The highest level of the Young Performers Certificates, Gold Certificate, aims to develop children's performance skills with a sound foundation to move up to Initial level graded exams in speech and drama, acting, musical theatre, communication skills or music. All group members should be given the opportunity to display some independence and confidence through individual, pair or small group contributions.

For this certificate the performers give a group presentation of a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 15 minutes in duration and show three or more presentation skills (voice, movement, mime, song, artwork, etc). At this level the expectation is that the children require less support. However, the teacher can discreetly direct the performance.

Similar stimuli to those used in Bronze Certificate or Silver Certificate can be used, and the teacher may wish to write a script that allows the group to show their strengths (eg playing musical instruments, dance, choral speaking, circus skills). Exploration can still happen through drama games and creative activities, but the presentation itself should be clearly structured, contain identifiable characters, and demonstrate contrasting moods and dynamics within an imagined storyline or situation.

As with the Silver Certificate, topics may be drawn from cross-curricular themes. The children may choose to look at a creation myth such as the Cherokee myth of how fire came into being, or the Inuit legend of why there are no trees. These stories give opportunities to present a structured drama, as well as creating inventive music and movement pieces to bring the animals to life, create larger scale artworks as backdrops and give opportunities for the children to take on solo roles. Teachers may also wish to link the presentation to a well-known fairy tale or a locally important news story.

Filming the presentation for digital assessment

When filming the performances for the Young Performers Certificates, the teacher should ensure that the camera angle is as wide as possible and ensure that every moment is captured (and children don't wander out of shot!) This creates the sense of a 'stage'. Children should be encouraged to perform to an imagined audience rather than the camera alone, so that they remember to project their voices and show their facial expressions.

Mark out an area on the floor to be used in advance, and check that the camera has a wide enough angle and enough headroom to film the whole presentation. A tablet or phone may be sufficient, but whichever mode of filming is being used, it will be best to secure it on a tripod to avoid camera-shake.

The teacher may find it easier to place a grid with numbers on the floor, or separate coloured areas so that children know where they are moving during the presentation. Encourage children to perform their lines out front even if they are in conversation with someone else onstage, so that an audience can see their faces and hear the words clearly at all times.

Complete a sound-check ahead of making the final filmed submission. Film part of a rehearsal and listen back to it, to check that sound levels are audible and that sounds outside the filming space are not intruding. Performers learning about contrasts in vocal volume from being quiet when 'off-stage' and projecting clearly when speaking onstage is an important step towards understanding performance skills.

If necessary, create an 'off-stage' seating area to the side of the performance space, so that children know where to go and be quiet when it is not their turn but are still able to watch the action and know their cues.

For a Bronze Certificate, the teacher can lead the children on and off stage if required, but as the children progress through Silver and Gold they should be encouraged to take responsibility for performing independently, responding to simple teacher signals/encouragement.

All children will benefit from a 'walk-through' to encourage their understanding of space, sequence and physical confidence. This is separate to a dress-rehearsal, and simply practises the entrances, exits and staging. Being interactive with the children and asking them what happens next will help them build a 'visual map' in their minds of the performance.

Ensure that either the children introduce themselves clearly at the beginning, or a suitable programme is attached to the submission that identifies the children and the characters.

Remind the children to enjoy themselves when performing and reassure them that the audience is friendly and supportive and is keen to know what happens in their presentation.

Costume, staging devices/support

If candidates wish to make use of costume, props and/or set, the teacher should ensure that their use will not cause the performance to overrun.

Role gender

Roles can be performed by any gender.

General guidance and policies

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

Trinity is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the candidates that we work with. All posts, including examiners, are subject to a safer recruitment process, including the disclosure of criminal records and vetting checks. Our safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and promote safeguarding and safer working practice across all parts of our work.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Trinity is committed to providing equality of opportunity and treatment for all, and will not unlawfully or unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of any characteristic.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

Trinity is committed to creating an inclusive environment where candidates with special needs are able to demonstrate their skills and feel welcomed. We aim to make our exams accessible to all. We treat each candidate individually when considering how we can achieve this aim, recognising that requirements vary. Candidates can be assured that we do not compromise on the standard of marking or allow the quality of exams to be affected in any way.

All provision is tailored to the particular needs of each candidate. In order to be most beneficial, as full an explanation as possible of the required provision should be given. The need and request for provision should be made on the appropriate form available to download from trinitycollege.com/drama-csn. For enquiries please contact drama-csn@trinitycollege.com

DATA PROTECTION

Trinity is registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner's Office in the United Kingdom under data protection legislation. Please see trinitycollege.com/data-protection for the most up-to-date information about Trinity's data protection procedures and policies.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Trinity is committed to providing a high-quality service for all our users from initial enquiry through to certification. Full details of our customer service commitment can be found at trinitycollege.com/customer-service

ASSESSMENT INFRINGEMENTS

All assessment infringements will be referred directly to Trinity's central office by the examiner. Assessment reports may be withheld until the outcome of any referral has been considered by Trinity.

MALPRACTICE

Trinity requires its registered exam centres to report any suspected malpractice by candidates, teachers or examiners. In situations where a centre is found to be inadequate or to be guilty of malpractice, either in terms of provision of facilities or in administration, the exam centre may be required to suspend all of its activities relating to Trinity exams until the cause of the problem is identified and rectified, if appropriate. In extreme circumstances, the centre may have its registered centre status withdrawn.

In the very rare cases or circumstances where a centre or individual may be suspected of malpractice, Trinity will aim to minimise any inconvenience caused to any affected candidate, and would like to thank candidates, teachers and centre staff for their kind co-operation in reporting any suspected incident of cheating, thereby assisting Trinity in upholding the quality and integrity of its assessment process.