

English KS3 and 4 Modern Drama course – Blood Brothers by Willy Russell

In order to pass or achieve the higher grades at IGCSE and IB, including English Literature, students need to be familiar with theatrical conventions, how plays differ from other forms of literature, and how to write about a play using specific terminology, evidence and analytical skills. It is also a requirement of Key Stage 4 English Literature courses that students understand the impact historical and social contexts have on texts.

This course will give learners an opportunity to read a modern play that often appears as a set text on GCSE and IB courses, and was adapted into a hugely successful musical theatre production in the West End. It is a modern tragedy, set in Liverpool, England, in the 1980s. The play touches on themes of family, poverty, education, fate and love.

The skills included on this course meet the requirements for both IGCSE and IB MYB expectations. Students will read the full play and have an opportunity to read in role, and to develop their own drama skills, including acting, stage and set design, lighting design, costume design. Students will find out about the political and social context in which the play is set, and consider how this impacts on the audience. They will also discuss a range of clips from productions by both professional companies and amateur productions so they can discuss the script in performance and consider the function of songs in musical theatre.

Skills covered:

- use a repertoire of reading strategies to analyse and explore different layers of meaning within the play
- analyse and respond to the range of ideas and differing viewpoints, purposes and themes
- develop interpretations of the play, supporting points with detailed textual evidence
- discuss their own and others' reading, take account of others' views of what they have read, and express informed opinions
- analyse how plays are shaped by audiences' preferences and opinions
- Consider the historical and social context of the play
- develop a clear understanding and analyse the ways in which writers use language, form and structure
- develop acting skills including voice, movement and recitation
- learn about a range of dramatic conventions, including terminology and stagecraft.
- Learn what is meant by the term 'tragedy' in theatre and how this is adapted to fit a modern play.

	LESSON	CONTENT
1	What is a play?	Our Day out
2	Character study	<i>Our Day out</i>
3	Status	<i>Grease</i>
4	Blood Brothers Background to the play – form and genre Intro to social and historical context	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An introduction to the play• To differentiate between literary forms.• To establish genre conventions.• To speculate on characters and action

5	Social and historical context Reading act 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Act 1 – Social and Historical context • To know what is meant by social and historical context. • To make links between the play's writer, its setting and its place in time. • To begin considering the significance and effect of the social and historical context.
6	Reading Act 1 Themes and motifs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes and motifs in Act 1 • To define themes and motifs. • To link themes to the play's events and characters. • To offer a personal response.
7	Act 2 Reading Staging and character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 2 Character analysis and staging • To read and respond to Act Two. • To consider the practicalities and effects of staging. • To understand character motivation.
8	Act 2 Lyrical analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 2 Lyrical analysis • To consider where songs derive their meaning and effect from. • To analyse the lyrics of the songs. • To creatively present our analysis.
9	Social and historical context writing practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know what is meant by social and historical context. • To make links between the play's writer, its setting and its place in time. • To begin considering the significance and effect of the social and historical context.
10	End of unit assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Unit Assessment