



Y10
GCSE Drama

For your Y10 mock exam, we will be completing sections A and B of a past GCSE paper. You have been taught this content before but you must revise as we haven't covered it in lessons since before Christmas.

Any questions, just pop me an email 😊

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Tick off the revision topics you have completed in the table below.

Section A – Theatre Role and Terminology

Page	Topic	Revised 1	Revised 2	I feel great about this bit!
12-13	Staging, theatre roles			

Section B – Set Play, Blood Brothers

Page	Topic	Revised 1	Revised 2	I feel great about this bit!
3	Character of Mickey			
4	Character of Edward			
4	Character of Mrs Johnstone			
5	Character of Mrs Lyons			
5	Character of Linda			
5	Character of Narrator			
6	Themes			
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9	Question 6.2 practise			
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11	Question 6.4 practise			

Section B – Set Play

Blood Brothers - Characters overview

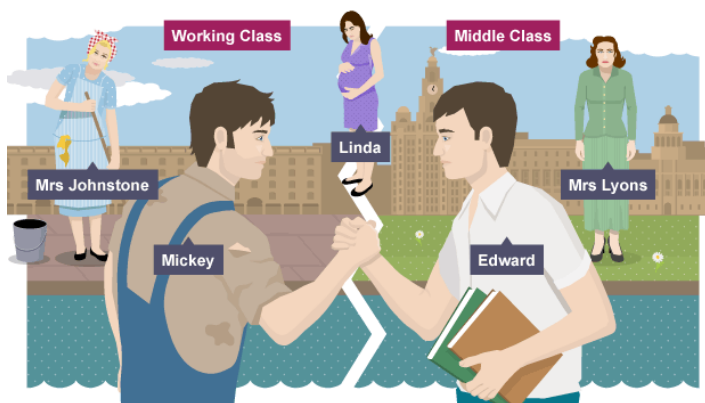


The main characters in *Blood Brothers* are the twins Mickey Johnstone and Edward Lyons, and their mothers Mrs Johnstone and Mrs Lyons. Mickey and Edward’s friend Linda, who becomes Mickey’s wife, is also an important character. The Narrator is on stage throughout the play and communicates with the audience rather than being involved in the events. Mickey’s brother Sammy and Edward’s father Mr Lyons feature less in the play, but both have an impact on the plot.

Main Characters	Secondary Characters	Minor Characters
Mickey Johnstone Edward Lyons Mrs Johnstone Mrs Lyons	Linda narrator	Sammy Mr Lyons

Mickey Johnstone

Mickey is the twin brother who is brought up by his biological mother with his seven older siblings. We first meet him when he is seven years old and he is friendly and excitable. He looks up to his brother Sammy, and is jealous of the freedom that he has. Mickey is close to his mother throughout the play and they have a good relationship. Mickey is outgoing when he meets Edward and immediately accepts him as a close friend, despite their differences. When he meets Edward, his lack of education and his use of swear words and slang are emphasised by the contrast with his blood brother, who is well educated and does not know any swear words. He is shown to be loyal and loving towards his friends Edward and Linda.



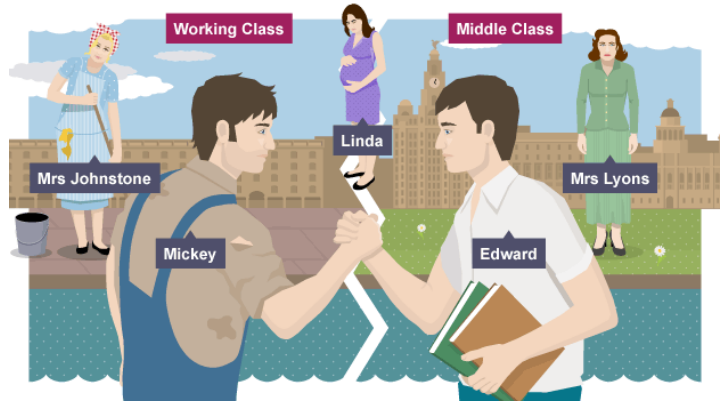
When he is a teenager, Mickey is awkward and shy, particularly with Linda - who he has feelings for, which he is unable to express. He still lacks a good education and behaves badly at school, getting suspended for being rude to a teacher. Although Sammy is a very bad role model for him, Linda stops Mickey from being influenced by his older brother by keeping him from getting involved with violent acts like threatening the bus conductor. When he meets Edward again, after years apart since Edward and his family moved away to the country, they immediately rekindle their close friendship.



As an adult, Mickey’s energy and positivity are destroyed by his experience of hopeless unemployment and being unable to support his new wife, Linda, and their child. This leads to him becoming angry and jealous of Edward. After being sent to prison for his involvement in Sammy’s armed robbery, Mickey becomes depressed, affecting his marriage with Linda and his self-esteem.

Edward Lyons

Edward is the twin taken away from his biological mother and brought up as part of the wealthy Lyons family. He is an only child and is the focus of his mother's attention, as his father is often absent due to working. Edward is a warm and kind boy, who enjoys interacting with other children. When he meets Mickey at the age of seven, he is excited by his new friend's rebelliousness. He is drawn to Mrs Johnstone, who is very different to his own mother.



As a teenager, Edward is a loyal friend. He puts Mickey's feelings before his own, encouraging Mickey to ask Linda to be his girlfriend even though Edward has feelings for her himself. When he is older, Edward is able to draw away a little from his overprotective mother and become more independent, spending as much of his time as he can with Mickey and Linda.

When he is 18, Edward goes to Oxford University, putting him on the path to becoming successful – as an adult he is Councillor Lyons. He lacks understanding of Mickey's feelings when he is made redundant because he cannot **empathise** with his situation. When he is older, he helps Linda find Mickey a job and helps them find a family home. However, he also starts an affair with Linda, leading to the final tragedy.



Mrs Johnstone

Mrs Johnstone is a warm and caring mother, despite the struggles she faces supporting her eight children alone. At the start of the play, she describes how difficult her life has been. When she first met her husband, he would take her out dancing, but as she had more children, he thought she was too fat and eventually left her for another woman. Mrs Johnstone starts the play with seven children and is pregnant with her eighth. When she finds out that she is having twins, she panics, which Mrs Lyons takes advantage of.

Mrs Johnstone is **naïve** in allowing Mrs Lyons to convince her to give up one of the twins. Her superstitions and lack of education enable her employer to take advantage of her. Mrs Johnstone's poor judgement is also shown in her buying things from the catalogue that she cannot afford.

Although Mrs Johnstone is very loving, she does not have control over her children and they cause a lot of trouble. When the family receives a letter from the council telling them that they are being rehoused in the countryside, she is very excited that they can have a new start. This is shown to be correct in many ways, as in her new home Mrs Johnstone is much happier - until Mickey and Sammy are sent to prison.



Mrs Lyons

Mrs Lyons is a very lonely woman, who is the opposite of her employee Mrs Johnstone. At the start of the play, she is alone in her large home as her husband often works away on business - and is away for nine months at this point. She reveals to Mrs Johnstone that they are unable to have children and her husband refuses to adopt. Mrs Lyons' desperation leads to her manipulating Mrs Johnstone into giving her one of the twins.



Mrs Lyons is **devious** in the way that she persuades Mrs Johnstone, which shows how much she wants a child, but also suggests that she has a cruel streak. After she has taken the child and Mr Lyons has returned home - believing Edward to be his son, she fires Mrs Johnstone as she is scared about her becoming close to the baby. As Edward grows up, Mrs Lyons is overprotective and jealous. She gives her son very little freedom and becomes paranoid when she learns that he is spending time with his biological family. This actually leads to Edward becoming more distant from her, as he finds her suffocating.

When Edward is a teenager and openly spends his time with Mickey and Linda, Mrs Lyons' mental health deteriorates, leading her to attempt to attack Mrs Johnstone with a knife when she refuses to move away. Finally, Mrs Lyons is the person who reveals to Mickey that Edward and Linda are involved in a romance, pointing them out to him.

Linda

Linda is a kind and confident character. From the age of seven, she protects Mickey and stands up for him against his brother Sammy and anyone else who she feels in being unfair to him. As a teenager, she is open about her love for Mickey and often embarrasses him by expressing this in public. When she is in her late teens, she falls pregnant with Mickey's baby and marries him.

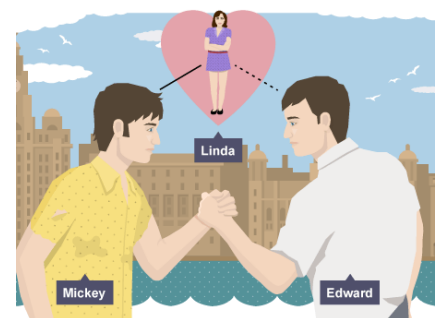


As an adult, Linda has very few opportunities due to her poor background and early pregnancy. She stands by Mickey while he is in prison but becomes frustrated by him continuing to take anti-depressants after being released from prison, as she feels that they stop him being himself. Although she can be seen as selfish for having an affair with Edward, in many ways she is just as trapped by her circumstances as Mickey is.

Narrator

The Narrator is an unusual character. He does not directly interact with the characters on stage - although he sometimes speaks to them, they do not respond, but instead comments on events and communicates with the audience.

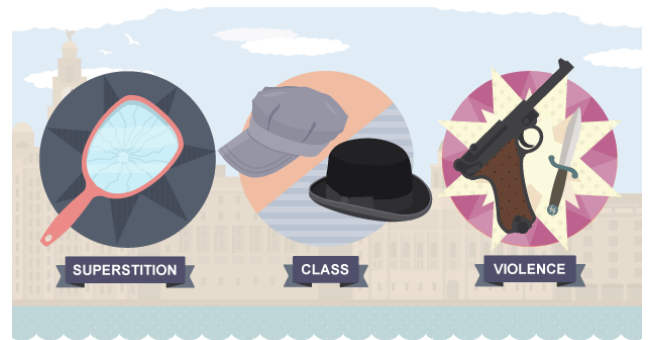
The Narrator serves several purposes in the play. He acts as a social conscience, drawing the audience's attention to the rights and wrongs of characters' actions. He also reminds the audience of the mothers' guilt and the twins' inevitable death. At times, the Narrator serves a practical purpose in the play, with songs and speeches that explain passages in time and describes parts of the plot.



Blood Brothers - Themes overview

Willy Russell asks several questions of the audience through the events of *Blood Brothers*, particularly about how equal our society is. Through presenting twins, who have the same [DNA](#) but are brought up in such different families, the playwright shows how much our life experiences affect the opportunities we have in life.

Russell also introduces the idea of superstition through the character of Mrs Johnstone. Should we accept that fate is in control of our lives or are other factors more important? Another theme introduced in the play is violence. This is present in Mickey's life from when we meet him at the age of seven and gets worse and worse until his and Edward's deaths at the end of the play.



play.

Social class and inequality

Russell wrote *Blood Brothers* in 1981, and it was first performed as a musical in 1983. This was during the period that Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was in power. There was very high unemployment during this time, particularly in industrial working-class areas in northern England, such as Liverpool - where Russell is from and where the play is set. Mickey and his family represent the working classes, who were badly affected by the economic downturn, whereas Edward and the Lyons family embody the middle classes, who thrived in the 1980s.

The difference between the Johnstone and Lyons families draws attention to the impact that a person's social class can have on their opportunities in life. From the moment that Mrs Johnstone goes to work for Mrs Lyons at the beginning of the play, the audience's attention is drawn to how their lives are worlds apart. This contrast is emphasised throughout the play, through the characters of Mickey and Edward. Even at the age of seven, the twins' experiences of life are [disparate](#). When they are young, their friendship overcomes their differences, but as they get older, the space between the brothers gets wider and harder for them to move past. Margaret Thatcher believed that anyone could be successful if they worked hard. Russell demonstrates that for Mickey this is not true. Without having the opportunities that Edward is given, Mickey's prospects are very limited, regardless of how hard he works and his desire to succeed.

Superstition and Fate

Mrs Johnstone's superstition is revealed early on in *Blood Brothers* and is one of the things that gives Mrs Lyons power over her. This is linked to fate and destiny, because Mickey and Edward's death is shown to be inevitable from the opening scene, making the superstition Mrs Lyons tells Mrs Johnstone about the twins come true. The narrator is a key character for this theme, as he reminds the audience of the twins' fate at several different points of the play. However, while superstition and fate are very important themes in *Blood Brothers*, Russell questions whether they really exist or whether social class is more important in determining Mickey and Edward's futures

Violence

Violence has a presence in the working class characters' lives from a young age. When we first meet Mickey as a seven year old, he has a toy gun and he plays games involving imaginary guns with his friends and neighbours. The violence escalates as the play progresses, culminating in the tragic death of Mickey and Edward. Sammy, Mickey's older brother, is a key character linked to this theme and he is connected in some way to most of the violent acts in the play. Violence reflects a lack of control; when characters start to lose power in some way, they become more violent.

In this section, you will be given an extract and have to answer 4 questions. 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4

Mrs Lyons (almost inaudibly) Give one to me.

Mrs Johnstone What?

Mrs Lyons (containing her excitement) Give one of them to me.

Mrs Johnstone Give one to you?

Mrs Lyons Yes ... yes.

Mrs Johnstone (taking it almost as a joke) But y' can't just ...

Mrs Lyons When are you due?

Mrs Johnstone Erm, well, about ... Oh, but Mrs ...

Mrs Lyons Quickly, quickly, tell me ... when are you due?

Mrs Johnstone July he said, the beginning of ...

Mrs Lyons July ... and my husband doesn't get back until the middle of July. He need never guess ...

Mrs Johnstone (amused) Oh, it's mad ...

Mrs Lyons I know , it is. It's mad ... but it's wonderful, it's perfect. Look, look, you're what, four months pregnant, but you're only just beginning to show ... so, so I'm four months pregnant and I'm only just beginning to show. (She grabs a cushion and arranges it beneath her dress.) Look, look. I could have got pregnant just before he went away. But I didn't tell him in case I miscarried, I didn't want to worry him whilst he was away. But when he arrives home I tell him we were wrong, the doctors were wrong. I have a baby, our baby. Mrs Johnstone, it will work, it will if only you'll

Mrs Johnstone Oh, Mrs Lyons, you can't be serious.

Mrs Lyons You said yourself, you said you had too many children already.

Mrs Johnstone Yeh, but I don't know if I wanna give one away.

Mrs Lyons Already you're being threatened by the welfare people. Mrs Johnstone, with two more children how can you possibly avoid some of them being put into care? Surely, it's better to give one child to me. Look, at least if the child was with me you'd be able to see him every day, as you came to work.

6.1 Practise

06.1 You are designing a **setting** for a performance of this extract. Your setting must reflect the context of Blood Brothers, set in a working class community in the 1960s.

[4 marks]

Key vocabulary to use: Colours, Type of staging, actor/audience relationship, material, how set is moved, props, cyclorama (projection), flats (painted wooden boards to show scenery), How location is created, How Time period is created, How the Time of day is created, How the set enhances the mood or atmosphere, floor coverings, drapes, furnishings, positioning of entrances/exits, Use of space (centre stage, up stage, downstage), Levels, Physical theatre to create set



You must DESCRIBE in tiny details, using key words, this is what gets you the marks!

6.1	Description	What does this convey about the context of the play?
Point 1 (1 minute)		
Point 2 (1 minute)		
Point 3 (1 minute)		
Point 4 (1 minute)		

Question 6.2 Practise

06.2 You are performing the role of Mrs Lyons

Describe how you would use your vocal and physical skills to perform the line below **and** explain the effects you want to create.

“ You said yourself, you said you had too many children already”



[8 marks]

Posture	Pace	Hand gestures	Pace	Pause	Projection
Mannerisms	Facial expression	Levels	Pitch	Tone	Emphasis
Proxemics	Eye contact	Gait (walk)	Inflection	Accent	Vocal mannerisms

	Describe what you would do	What does it show about your character <u>in this scene?</u>	What effect do you want to create for the audience??
Voice			
	Describe what you would do	What does it show about your character <u>in this scene?</u>	What effect do you want to create for the audience??
Movement			

Question 6.3 Practise

You are performing the role of Mrs Johnstone

Focus on the shaded part of the extract. Explain how you and the actor playing Mrs Lyons might use the **performance space** and **interact** with each other **to create tension** for your audience

[12 marks]

		Describe	Analyse (what will it convey about the characters)	Explain how this will create tension for the audience
Performance Space (proxemics, set, stage positioning)	Point 1			
	Point 2			
Interactions (eye contact, touch, facial exp, reactions)	Point 1			
	Point 2			

Section B - Question 6.4 PRACTISE

You are performing the role of Mrs Johnstone Describe **how** you would use your acting skills to interpret Mrs Johnstone in this extract of the play and **explain** why your ideas are appropriate for this extract and the play as a whole. (20 marks) A03

Voice

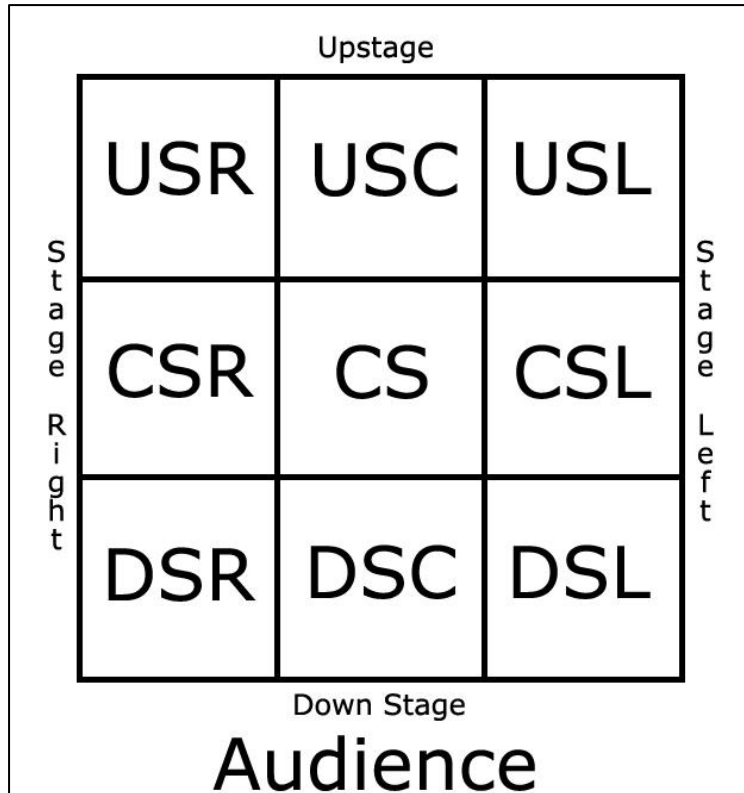
Describe what you would do and QUOTE the line you'll do it on	What does it show about your character <u>in this scene?</u>	How does this contrast/echo/foreshadow Mrs J's voice in another part of the play?

Movement

Describe what you would do and QUOTE the line you'll do it on	What does it show about your character <u>in this scene?</u>	How does this contrast/echo/foreshadow Mrs J's movement in another part of the play?

Y10 Drama
End of Year Exam Revision

Stage positioning



Theatre Roles and Responsibilities

Theatre Maker	Role and responsibilities
Playwright	This is the name given to the person who writes the play.
Performer	A performer is an actor or entertainer who realises a role or performance in front of an audience.
Understudy	An actor who studies another's role so that they can take over when needed.
Lighting designer	The lighting designer is responsible for designing the lighting states and, if required, special lighting effects for a performance. The final design will result in a lighting plot which is a list of the lighting states and their cues.
Sound designer	The sound designer is responsible for designing the sound required for a performance. This may include underscoring, intro and outro music as well as specific effects. The final design will result in a sound plot which is a list of the sounds required and their cues.
Set designer	The set designer is responsible for the design of the set for a performance. They will work closely with the director and other designers so that there is unity between all the designs and the needs of the performance.
Costume designer	The person who designs the costumes for a performance. The costume department of a theatre is often called the wardrobe.
Puppet designer	The person who designs the puppets for a performance.
Technician	A person who works backstage either setting up technical equipment such as microphones or rigging lights before a production or operating technical equipment during a performance.
Director	A director is in charge of the artistic elements of a production. A director will often have the initial creative idea ('concept') for a production, will work with the actors in rehearsal, and will collaborate with designers and the technical team to realise this idea in performance.
Stage manager	The Stage Manager is in charge of all aspects of backstage, including the backstage crew. They will oversee everything that happens backstage before, during and after a performance. During the rehearsal period, the Stage Manager and their team will make sure that all props are found or made, scene changes are rehearsed and smooth, and all other aspects of backstage are prepared. They are also in charge of the rehearsal schedule.
Theatre manager	This is the person who is responsible for and manages the front-of-house team who deal with the audience during the production (for example, the box office manager, ushers and similar staff).

Proscenium Arch

A stage where the audience sits on one side only is called a **proscenium** arch stage, it has a proscenium arch over the stage which hides the equipment from the audience. The arc separates the audience from the stage and they can be sat quite far away.



Thrust stage



The audience sits on 3 sides, the stage “thrusts” out into the audience, this is a good way to remember the name! Actor can be close to the audience which creates an intimate atmosphere.

In-the-round stage



An **in-the-round** stage is positioned at the centre of the audience - ie there is audience around the whole stage. This type of stage creates quite an intimate atmosphere, and is good for drama that needs audience involvement. Actors need to change position frequently so ensure the audience can see a variety of facial expressions etc.

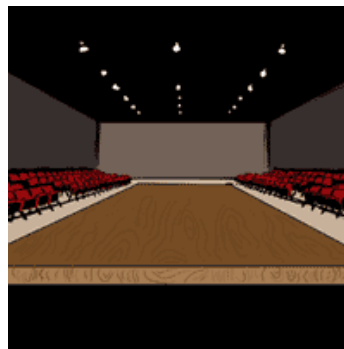
Promenade Staging

This can also be called **site specific theatre** and is where a location is chosen to create a specific effect. This is effective in helping the audience experience the atmosphere of the characters. Promenade staging can change during the performance with the audience moving between performance spaces.



Traverse stage

A stage where the audience sits on two sides is called a **traverse** stage. Again, this type of stage is good for creating an intimate atmosphere. The stage almost resembles a corridor or catwalk and the actors enter from either end.



End On Staging



The audience sit on one side of the production. This is very different to proscenium arch though. There is no arch to conceal lighting or equipment and there are no wings for actors to wait in before they enter the stage. The venues tend to be much smaller and more intimate.