



Blood Brothers

GCSE teaching pack

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Introduction

This GCSE pack is designed as a route through *Blood Brothers*, with teaching ideas, accompanying resources and suggestions for differentiation. The activities are designed to be flexible, creative and engaging, using a dramatic approach for many of the tasks. These are based on the core assessment objectives for GCSE English Literature (2015). The pack contains all of the Teachit English resources you need for teaching this unit of work, all of which were specifically commissioned for this pack.

The pack has been devised for use with the AQA, Edexcel and WJEC Eduqas GCSE English Literature specifications. The activities and ideas will help students to develop a close understanding of the play, its characters and the context in which it was written.

The pack has a total of 23 lessons, including pre-reading and post-reading activities as well as the chronological route through the text. Each lesson includes a selection of starter, main and plenary activities as well as suggested homework activities. Exam practice questions specific to each board are included at the end of Act 1 and at the end of the pack.

Throughout the pack, you'll find activities which directly address the various GCSE English Literature exam assessment objectives. To help you select activities relevant to the outcomes for which you're teaching, we have included specification grids and have matched the activities to the appropriate assessment objectives.

Page numbers relate to the Methuen Drama Modern Classics edition (2001).

The PowerPoint resources can be found on the Teachit English site where applicable.

Our thanks go to contributor Annie Fox who has written this pack and the accompanying resources.

If you have any questions about the pack, please get in touch: support@teachit.co.uk or call us on 01225788850. Alternatively, you might like to give some feedback for other Teachit English members – you can do this by adding a comment on the *Blood Brothers* teaching pack page on Teachit English.

Specification summaries

AQA GCSE English Literature

Specification: English Literature (8702)

Example papers and mark schemes: English Literature (8702)

AQA Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

Section A Modern texts

- External examination.
- Whole examination: 2 hours 15 minutes.
- 45 minutes to answer this question.
- A choice of two questions on this text.
- The candidate is asked to consider an aspect of the text such as character, theme, language, setting and ideas. Bullet points are given for guidance.
- Students are not allowed to take copies of the text into the examination.
- Each question is worth 30 marks + 4 marks awarded for AO4.

AO1	<p>Read, understand and respond to texts.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response • use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.
AO3	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.
AO4	Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Edexcel GCSE English Literature

Specification: English Literature (1ET0)

Example papers and mark schemes: English Literature (1ET0)

Component 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature

Section B – Post-1914 Literature – British play or British novel

- External examination.
- One essay question from a choice of two.
- A short quotation is given as stimulus for the answer.
- Questions will focus on plot, setting, characters, themes and ideas.
- Students will be required to explore the question in relation to context.
- Students are not allowed to take copies of the text into the examination.
- Students will have approximately 50 minutes to answer this question.
- Each question is worth 40 marks which includes 8 marks for AO4.

AO1	<p>Read, understand and respond to texts.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response • use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.
AO3	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.
AO4	Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

WJEC Eduqas GCSE English Literature

Specification: English Literature (C720QS)

Example papers and mark schemes: English Literature (C720QS)

Component 2: Post-1914 Prose/Drama, 19th Century Prose and Unseen Poetry

Section A: Post-1914 Prose/Drama

- External examination.
- Whole examination: 2 hours 30 minutes.
- Candidates will answer one source-based question on their set text.
- Questions will be based on plot, events, key themes, characters and ideas.
- Students are advised to spend 45 minutes on the question.
- There are 40 marks available for the question, 5 of which are for AO4.
- This response is worth 20% of the GCSE.
- Students are not allowed to take the text into the examination.

AO1	<p>Read, understand and respond to texts.</p> <p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response • use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
AO2	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.
AO3	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.
AO4	Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Act 1

Lesson 1 – Pre-reading: how to read a play and identify drama genres

Starter activity

Sorting game. Begin by revising some of the terminology students will need to study a play. Using Resource 1, ask students to sort the terms into features that you would expect to see in a play, novel or poem (or, in some cases, more than one of the above or all of the above). There is an answer sheet with the resource, and the most helpful aspect of this activity is to discuss what sets drama apart.

Main activities

Whole class discussion. How is drama different from novels or poetry? Draw out the key features:

- importance of dialogue
- use of stage directions
- meant to be seen, not just read
- awareness of audience: meant to be a group rather than a solitary experience
- collaboration between playwright, director, actors and designers.

Prior experiences. Working in groups, ask students to list the names of any plays they have ever seen or read – this can be anything from a pantomime to a West End musical, from Theatre-in-Education to Shakespeare, or if the class has had very limited experience of theatre, then ask them to discuss what they would like to see if they did go to the theatre (Something that is funny? Something with a favourite actor in it? Something with music? Something with a big cast?). Get students to discuss their experiences: what they enjoyed, what they would like to see next and why.

Drama genres. Split your class into five groups and give each of the groups a genre: comedy, tragedy, musical theatre, political theatre, melodrama. It would be helpful to put any drama students together and to give them political theatre or melodrama. Get the groups to draw out some of the main different genres of drama:

- Comedy: light-hearted tone, misunderstandings, witty dialogue, ends happily, audience is amused/laughs.
- Tragedy: serious tone, downfall of main character, ends unhappily, audience moved/saddened.
- Musical theatre: use of music and dance to tell the story, characters express themselves through song, often use exaggerated characters and chorus/ensemble, may be serious or light-hearted.
- Political theatre: aims to get across a political or social message, may use non-naturalistic techniques like directly addressing the audience or audience interaction, may set up oppositions (good guy versus bad guy), aims to stir the audience to action.
- Melodrama: exaggerated emotional plays, uses heightened characters and situations to engage the audience emotionally.

Oedipus Rex. Explain that the play they are going to study, *Blood Brothers*, uses conventions from many different types of dramatic genres, including comedy, musical theatre and political theatre, but one of these is tragedy. Use Resource 2 for definitions of tragedy, protagonist, tragic flaw, downfall and reversal of fortune. Then read the plot of *Oedipus Rex* (Resource 2).

Ask the students to locate the following features in the plot:

- a tragic hero or protagonist
- a reversal of fortune (from good to bad)
- a tragic flaw
- a tragic downfall.

As an extension activity, also discuss features like: the role of the chorus, misunderstandings about identity and fate.

Summarising *Oedipus Rex.* Place the students in groups and assign each group a section of the play for which they have to create six lines of dialogue and at least one action/stage direction to convey the meaning of that section. The plot has been divided into six sections for you.

Plenary activities

The moral of the tale. On the board write:

'What would you have to change about *Oedipus Rex* to make it a modern tragedy?'

OR

'Many people think that tragedies show children paying for the misdeeds of their parents. To what extent do you think this is true of the tragedy *Oedipus Rex*?'

Write down quick-fire responses. For the first question, prompt students: where would you set it? What job/occupation would the main character have? What would make it tragic to a modern audience?

Match the terminology. Use Resource 3 to get students to match the terminology with the definitions. Answers:

Term	Definition
Tragedy	A play in which the leading character experiences a reversal of fortune, leading to an unhappy ending.
Protagonist	The main character in a play.
Dialogue	The lines spoken by the characters in a play.
Stage directions	A description of the physical actions, or what is seen rather than said, in a play.
Chorus	Actors performing as a group rather than as individual characters.
Narrator	A character who stands outside the action of a play and describes events.
Tragic flaw	A character trait which may be responsible for the downfall of the tragic hero.

Sort out the terms

Place the descriptions from the next page into the most appropriate category. Some terms may occur in more than one type of literature.

Novels	Poetry	Drama

written in paragraphs	most associated with figurative language	written in lines	written by a playwright	primarily written as dialogue	written by a novelist
uses stage directions	written by a poet	has a cast list of characters at the beginning	written to be performed onstage before an audience	may have rhyming lines	may have music in it
may have a narrator as a character on stage	Shakespeare is most famous for this type of literature	tells a story	may be written in stanzas	may have many characters	may use a 'narrative voice'



Teacher's answer sheet

Some statements may go in more than one category, so students may find it difficult to decide on their final 'answers'. Here are some suggestions for where the statements would be best placed:

Novels	Poetry	Drama
written by a novelist	written by a poet	written by a playwright
written in paragraphs	written in lines	primarily written as dialogue
tells a story	may have rhyming lines	uses stage directions
may use a 'narrative voice'	may be written in stanzas	has a cast list of characters at the beginning
may have many characters	most associated with figurative language	may have a narrator as a character on stage
		may have music in it
		Shakespeare is most famous for this type of literature
		tells a story
		is written to be performed onstage before an audience

Points to be drawn out:

There are areas of overlap between the different genres. For example:

- Shakespeare wrote both poetry and drama, but he is most famous for his plays.
- Drama might use rhyme and poetry might not.
- Novels may use a lot of dialogue or very little. However most drama relies almost entirely on dialogue. (There are a few rare plays that are entirely stage directions but this is not the norm!)
- Poetry might be performance poetry and therefore meant to be performed onstage.

However, they should note:

- The performance and collaborative nature of drama sets it apart.
- Plays are set out differently on the page from poetry or novels.
- The skills of the playwright involve ways of making their intentions clear to their collaborators and the audience.
- They should be aware when a playwright is writing in prose or verse.
- Students must make clear that they are writing about plays and not novels/poems.