

Year 9 –Here’s Lookin’ at You, Kid’: A View from the Bridge - Unit aims: The study of ‘A View From The Bridge’ provides an opportunity for pupils to become familiar with dramatic conventions (stage directs, dramatic irony, the setting of plays into acts and scenes), stagecraft and the role of the reader as audience as well as the social historical context of 1950s Brooklyn and accompanying ideas of immigration, belonging, community and betrayal. Dramatic approaches to the text are strongly encouraged. The final mastery level assessment in this unit is a written essay that tracks the development of a character or theme across the play. Pupils will be expected to write assuredly about how characters/ themes are presented in drama and demonstrate an understanding of how the audience are positioned by and respond to the playwright’s craft.

STIMULATE & GENERATE - FOCUS ON ENGAGEMENT, DISCUSSION AND BUILDING CULTURAL CAPITAL

CAPTURE, SIFT & SORT - FOCUS ON DEVELOPING KEY SKILLS LINKED TO SUCCESS CRITERIA/ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

CREATE, REFINE & EVALUATE - PRODUCE EXTENDED PIECES, EDIT AND REFINE WORK

Betrayal: What would it take for you to betray someone you loved?

In the first lesson/s pupils develop an understanding of the concept of betrayal. Possible activities could include:

- A series of quotations relating to betrayal placed around the room. Pupils move around reading these and then note down a definition of the word.
- A ranking activity. Which actions do they think are fair and justified? Which is worse? What would the consequences of these actions be?
- If the pupils are comfortable discussing it, ask them about their own experiences of betrayal or those that they have heard about.

KEY LEARNING

- To succinctly summarise and synthesise ideas
- To explore themes, by relating my own experiences and the wider world

What was America Like in the 1950s?

Start to set the moral and social context of the time by presenting pupils with short clips/ images of 1950s America. There is also an opportunity to focus on skills of interpretation and look beyond surface meanings to symbolic meanings/ alternative or modern interpretations.

Practise these skills using the image of the perfect life from the 1950s.

Allow pupils to read through the different texts and record what they learn about immigration and about Women in society at the time (opportunity for group work here – although some pupils may need help accessing the meaning/ significance of the texts)

KEY LEARNING

- To ask insightful questions (of images/film clips) to build meaning
- To explore varied interpretations
- To summarise and synthesise ideas

How do I visualise a play text?

Start with an image of the Brooklyn Bridge. Ask pupils ‘What is being shown in this picture?’ – encourage them to come up with at least 2 interpretations (this could be shared as post-it notes on the board)

Give pupils the stage directions from the start of the play. Explain unfamiliar terms – check comprehension of what is being described in this scene.

Extension questions can be used here to extend thinking or as a homework activity.

Ask pupils to sketch the stage design on plain A4 labelling with quotations from the stage directions. Encourage them to think about mood, atmosphere colour and lighting.

Share a couple of their interpretations back and ask them to explain their thinking. Compare with the photos of different stagings of this play. (Note: if pupils are unfamiliar with theatre you may need to share these first and then pupils produce their own design)

KEY LEARNING

- To ask insightful questions (of images/film clips) to build meaning
- To develop a range of possible interpretations
- To justify ideas with evidence from the text

What are my first impressions of the characters in the play?

Remind pupils that, as this is a play text, we expect them to read the text dramatically. Share the slide on ‘How to tawk like a Noo Yawker’ – get pupils to practise the accent. Share a clip of the Broadway production so they can hear how it is spoken.

Read from p. 5 – 15

Share the key quotations for Eddie, Catherine and Beatrice. What are our first impressions? Pupils discuss and then annotate quotations

KEY LEARNING

- To ask insightful questions to build meaning
- To demonstrate an understanding of how a play script communicates meaning about character
- To justify ideas with evidence from the text

How do I deepen my understanding of character?

Share a series of stills from the Broadway production – what do we learn about the relationships between the characters from these (groupwork opportunity)

KEY LEARNING

- To ask insightful questions (of images/stills) to build meaning
- To empathise with characters’ feelings
- To demonstrate understanding of a playwright/ director’s intentions
- To develop a range of possible interpretations

Apprentice piece – inference: What do we learn about Eddie’s feelings in this extract?

Return to the initial conversation between Eddie and Catherine. Provide groups/ pairs of pupils with different sections of the conversation – Model how to annotate in response to the key questions using a different section. Once pupils have completed the task, model how to turn your annotation into a written response.

Pupils complete their own response This needs to be marked formatively.

KEY LEARNING

- To ask insightful questions (of text/ scripts) to build meaning
- To empathise with characters’ feelings
- To analyse a writer’s use of language
- To write in a critical style embedding references to the text

Continue with reading the play.

Why is the end of act one such an important moment in the play?

Read p.35-42. Pupils practise acting out this section bringing it to a moment of high tension. Use the still from the Broadway production to discuss the relationship between characters and how tension is being created by the stagecraft of the scene. Ask pupils to identify the specific moments that produce the tension – discuss

KEY LEARNING

- To ask insightful questions (of text/ scripts) to build meaning
- To empathise with characters’ feelings
- To analyse a writer’s use of tension

Creative writing opportunity

Choose a still. Write a monologue in Catherine’s voice explaining her feelings about the other characters and her situation

KEY LEARNING

- To empathise with characters’ feelings
- To write in character using references to the events/written style of the play to create a plausible voice

Apprentice Piece – Structural Understanding : How do Eddie’s emotions change across the final section of the play?

Read up to the final section of the play where Eddie goes to see Alferi to betray Rodolfo and is then rejected by his friends Mike and Louis. (p.48-58) Pupils act the sections of this part of the play out in groups then discuss how Eddie is changing

Share key quotations with the pupils and ask them to plot these on a graph to show how his emotions shift - they should annotate for why he is feeling this way. Draft a written response

KEY LEARNING

- To ask insightful questions (of text/ scripts) to build meaning
- To empathise with characters’ feelings
- Analyse the writer’s use of structural features
- Explore the ways a writer has developed a character across a play
- To write in a critical style embedding references to the text

What is the symbolic meaning of the ending of ‘A View From The Bridge’?

Read up to the end of the play

Encouraging symbolic thinking: Using a selection of pictures ask pupils to choose the image that best matches the end of the play and explain to the rest of the group why they chose it . Then ask pupils to choose a character at the end of the play and a picture that best matches their circumstances. They then explain to the rest of the group/ class. Use this as an opportunity to return to the key essay concept of betrayal or to discuss where key characters have ended up

Share 4 key questions about the end of the play with the groups. Ask different pairs/ groups to come up with an answer to the key questions. Pupils then take notes on each question by sharing ideas with each other.

KEY LEARNING

- To ask insightful questions (of images/ text) to explore layers of meaning
- Evaluate a text, justifying opinions and considering the writer’s intentions

How does Miller present ideas about betrayal in ‘A View From the Bridge’?

This essay title is an example – feel free to adapt it to the needs of your group. Lower attaining pupils may benefit from something that is more character focused (they could look at how the character of Catherine changes across the play, for example).

Spend some time talking about essay planning and how to select key moments and quotations from across the play. Some class time needs to be dedicated to thinking about the key moments of betrayal. Remind pupils that they have looked at the key moments in detail across the unit of work and will be expected to return to these notes.

Explain how the introduction should start by defining the concept (returning to the very first lessons at the SOW) and then discuss how betrayal is presented through certain characters/ events.

As this is a mastery level piece please do not scaffold this paragraph by paragraph for them. Use shared and modelled writing to demonstrate essay writing skills in an alternative question – for example, how does Miller present ideas about Love in A View From the Bridge? Or how does the character of Beatrice develop across the play?

KEY LEARNING

- To explore themes, by relating my own experiences and the wider world
- Explore the ways a writer has developed a character across a play
- Analyse the writer’s use of language
- Analyse the writer’s use of structural features
- Write in a formal critical style
- Structure an analytical argument across an essay

Have I produced a piece of work that I am proud of?

Pupils return to the marking of this piece of work and reflect on how they did.

Essay writing will be an important skill in future– especially in KS4. Ask pupils to think about what they are proud of, what they need to do differently in the future, and how they need to improve

KEY LEARNING

- To reflect on the process of learning and written outcomes
- To identify future learning needs

