

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE REMOTE LEARNING BOOKLET

Name:

Class:

Teacher:

BLOOD BROTHERS

The following activities are designed around retrieval practice. Do your best to answer the questions without looking at your notes or the text. Answers for some of the activities can be found at the back of this booklet so you can mark your answers once you have finished. Be sure to revise anything you got wrong when reviewing your learning.

Activity 1: Retrieval Grid

Consider the following questions in the retrieval grid and answer them in the blank grid below. Consider the amount of points each question is worth. Attempt to answer in as much detail as possible.

What does the title of the play mean?	What were the two types of school during the 60s and 70s?	How does Mrs Lyons try to manipulate Mrs Johnson ?	What quotation does the play open with from Mrs Johnstone?
What is dramatic irony and how is it used by Russell to make the ending more tragic?	How is nature vs nurture explored in the play?	What is the narrator's role in the play?	What role does Mr Lyons play in Mickey's life as an adult?
What is Russell highlighting about the differences in social class?	Who tells Mickey that Edward and Linda are having an affair?	Why does violence have such a presence in the lives of the youngsters?	Which characters are foils of one another?

One Point	Two Points	Three Points	Four Points

Turn to the answers section of the booklet at the back and mark your answers. If your answer differs to the ones printed in the booklet, it is not necessarily incorrect but what is printed in the booklet is what I would expect you to have considered. Add in any missing gaps in knowledge in a different colour pen so you know what the focus of your revision should be. Once you have marked your answers, move on to the next activity.

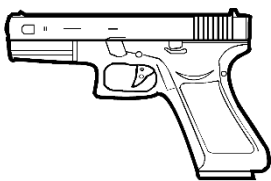
Activity 2: Dual Coding

Consider the following icons. Each icon relates to one of Russell's 'big ideas' that he explores in the play. Assign each icon a 'big idea' from the following list and then explain what each one means and where it appears in the play. One has been done for you. Check your answers at the back of the booklet when you have finished.

BIG IDEAS: Power, Poverty, Money, Love, Justice, Social Class, Motherhood, Violence, Superstition, Drug Abuse/Mental Health, Education, Childhood



Money – Russell uses the play to highlight the impact money can have on a person's choices. Mrs J gives up one of her babies because she cannot afford to keep him. Mrs L tries to use money to make Mrs J go away. Eddie offers Mickey money as he has 'plenty of it'.



Activity 3: Themes Retrieval

Task: Complete the table below with key events, characters and quotations that fit with the different themes in the play.

You could be asked a question about any of the themes below (perhaps with slightly different labels) so you need to know key events and ideas to discuss well.

CLASS

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

NATURE VS. NURTURE

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

EDUCATION

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

SUPERSTITION

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

LOVE

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

MONEY DOESN'T EQUAL HAPPINESS

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

VIOLENCE

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

CHILDHOOD

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

MOTHERHOOD

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

JUSTICE

Key Characters:

Key events:

Willy Russell's viewpoint:

Activity 4: Word Challenge Grid

Below are two grids containing a selection of random words. Connect each of the words to 'Blood Brothers', explaining how they link to the plot, characters or themes of Russell's play. The words have been selected at random so some may be a challenge but ensure you give it a go. There are multiple links that could be made so there are no answers in the back of the booklet for this activity. One has been done for you so you can see what I am expecting. There are no specific answers I am looking for here, so be creative with your links!

hope	home	desperation
opportunity	money	friendship
fear	betrayal	games

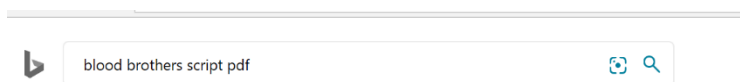
Friendship is explored by Russell mostly through the younger characters. The instant connection between Edward and Mickey leads to a firm friendship. Linda is there for Mickey from childhood despite him often pushing her away/

food	jobs	talk
divide	freedom	lost
unknown	femininity	plans

Activity 4: Quotation Retrieval

The grid below contains a selection of quotations with words missing. Fill in the missing gaps in each quotation with the correct words and complete the rest of the grid with information on who says the quotation and what it tells us about each character, or the character that is being spoken about. One has been almost completed for you.

If you cannot remember a quotation, try and find it in your script before looking at the answers. Haven't got a script? Search online!



QUOTATION	CHARACTER	EXPLANATION
'_____ can't live on _____ alone'	<i>Mrs J</i>	After learning that she is to carry twins, Mrs J highlights her desperation to Mrs L, who exploits it. Furthermore, it contradicts what we are told by the narrator that she is a mother 'with a stone in the place of a heart'
'But y'know the _____'s got your _____.'		
'They say that if either _____ learns that he was once a pair, they will both immediately _____'		
'This means we're _____ and that we'll always have to _____ by each other'		
'By the time I was _____ I looked like _____'		
'There's _____ upon the table an' a _____ in the pack'		

<p>'Don't you _____ what a _____ is?'</p>		
<p>'Maybe some _____, we'll move _____'</p>		
<p>'I _____ the day I met you. You _____ me'</p>		
<p>'Does _____ belong to you as well as _____' else?'</p>		
<p>'I _____ I always..._____ you, in a way'</p>		
<p>'There's a _____ gone _____ in the town tonight'</p>		
<p>'Tell me it's not _____. Say it's just a _____.'</p>		

Activity 5: Quick Questions!

Answer the following questions using one-sentence responses. Check your answers at the back and fill in gaps in a different coloured pen.

1. Why is Mrs Johnstone financially struggling at the start of the play?

2. How does Mrs Johnstone feel when she finds out she is expecting twins?

3. Why does Mrs Lyons sack Mrs Johnstone?

4. What makes Mr Lyons decide they should move to a new area?

5. How does Mrs Johnstone feel about being rehoused to Skelmesdale?

6. Why is Edward suspended from school?

7. Why is Mickey suspended from school?

8. What does Mrs Lyons do when she finds out the Johnstone's live in Skelmesdale too?

9. What else is happening on stage when Edward asks Linda to marry him?

10. 'Blood Brothers' has a cyclical structure. What does this mean?

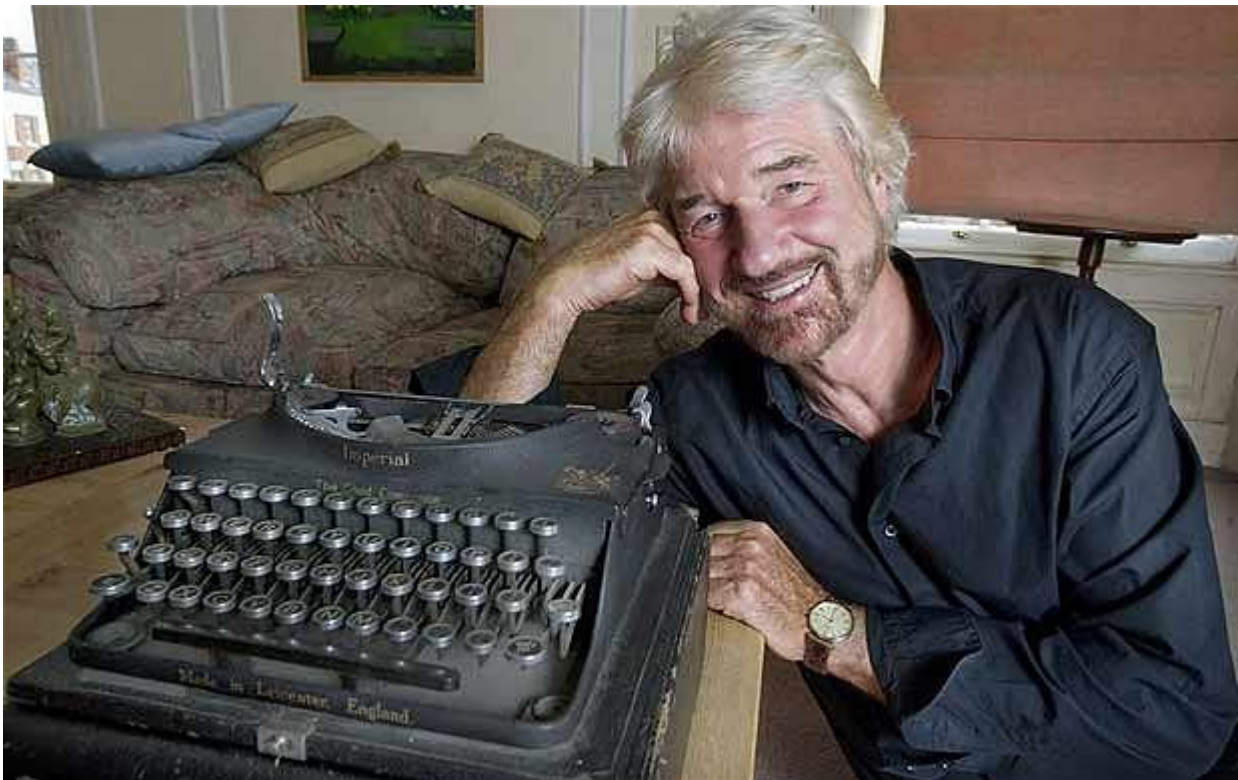
The following activities are designed around academic reading. This means you will be given an article to read and answer questions on. These articles have been selected because they will aid your understanding of Russell's play and the big ideas he explores. There are no answers at the back of the booklet for this section so do your best. If you need any assistance, leave a comment for your teacher on Show My Homework, do what you can and then move on to the next activity.

Activity 6: Activities for building contextual understanding

THE TELEGRAPH

Willy Russell: 'I want to talk about things that matter'

'Blood Brothers' is finally leaving the West End, but its restless writer Willy Russell still has plenty to say



'I don't have anything like the ambition I once had,' says Willy Russell. 'Having enjoyed so much success, I now feel able to explore and experiment with all sorts of other creative things' Photo: Paul Cooper

By Angela Levin, 15 Oct 2012

After 24 years and more than 10,000 performances, the musical *Blood Brothers* will, on November 10, finally leave the West End stage. Its story, of fraternal twins who are separated at birth and lead dramatically different lives, has played to packed houses, left its audience in tears, won four best musical awards and been called one of the greatest musicals of all time.

It was written by the legendary Willy Russell, now 65, whose hit shows also include Shirley Valentine, Educating Rita and John, Paul, George, Ringo... and Bert. "It's very flattering to have something run for that long," he says. "The occasion should be marked, which is why I've agreed to be interviewed."

It is a rare event and he establishes his boundaries from the start. "Some people find me difficult because they don't like confrontation," he begins, in a voice that could fill any auditorium. "But if I feel I have to say something, I will, because then everyone knows what they are dealing with." It soon becomes clear that I am dealing with a man who is self-protective, instinctive, a natural observer of the nuances of human behaviour, and someone who prefers meatier questions to more superficial ones.

"I am not interested in talking about road directions, cars or sport for more than five minutes," he warns. "It's why I cannot abide being in all-male company. I want to talk about things that matter."

It is no doubt one reason why his plays have depth as well as being entertaining. They have also provided a forum for him to work through issues of, or similar to, his own. For example, he ponders his own history of nature versus nurture in Blood Brothers; and his own return to education and its effects in Educating Rita (which was a hit film in 1983, starring Julie Walters and Michael Caine). And he takes a look, from the woman's point of view, at stagnating long-term marriages in Shirley Valentine. This, too, was initially a play, and became a hit film starring Pauline Collins in 1989.

He has been married to Annie, a former teacher and producer, for 43 years and they have a son, Rob, two daughters, Rachel and Ruth, and three young grandchildren. "I love them all to bits," he says.

The family home is a 1790 cottage in Woolton, just outside Liverpool, but we meet in a Georgian house in the centre of the city where he has his studio, office and an apartment. He also has homes in central London and in Portugal.

His own story is as powerful as any fiction. An only child, he was born in Whiston, near Liverpool, to a working-class couple who had little in common. "It was a phenomenally tense situation at home because my parents wanted different things from life," he recalls. His alcoholic father at various times worked in the mines, in a factory and ran a fish and chip shop. His mother was initially a nurse and then worked in a warehouse. "I realised I couldn't trust my father from a very early age, because I never knew what mood he would be in when he walked into a room. I can't bear people like that to this day. His drinking became out of control when I was a teenager, and he also took lots of Valium.

"His idea of a good time was to go to a spit-and-sawdust saloon, whereas my mother was aspirational and wanted to go somewhere elegant, and often took me instead. Being an only child made me self-reliant, and I can get by for days without interacting with others – which is good considering the work I do."

He believes that spending so much time with his mother, aunts and grandmother developed his understanding of women and of how to write convincing female characters.

"When I was 11 I was at quite a rough school, but we used to read one-act plays, and one about two babies switched at birth stayed with me. I thought a lot about what might happen to each of them, and it became the seed for Blood Brothers. (Please write that it absolutely isn't based on the 1844 novella The Corsican Brothers by Alexandre Dumas, as written in Wikipedia.)

"I am very interested in nature versus nurture. When I look at myself or catch sight of a gesture I make and see my father... I also know I might have drunk myself to death at 30. Luckily, I was saved by my in-laws, who nurtured me."

Russell left school at 15 with one O-level in English literature and, at his mother's suggestion, became a hairdresser. He also wrote songs and set up a group. His life and prospects changed when he met Annie Seagroatt in a café where he ran a folk club. "Her parents, who were professionals, welcomed me into their house, and my folk group used to rehearse there. We married when I was 21, which was late for a working-class boy. She was 22, which was early for someone who was middle class."

"Meeting Annie's family was a massive influence in my life. One day her mother Margaret, who knew I hated hairdressing, said if I didn't want to do it all my life, what was I going to do about it? I said I wanted to teach because I could then write in the holidays. She explained that I needed five O-levels, and suggested I went to night school. I was 20 and took her advice."

Russell became a teacher in Toxteth, but within a year was writing full time. His second play, and first successful one, was John, Paul, George, Ringo... and Bert. It was written for the Everyman Theatre, Liverpool, and transferred to the West End in the mid-Seventies. "I was 26 when I walked down London's Shaftesbury Avenue and saw my name in lights. Success came very easily. Sadly, we cannot get it performed any more. Sony, who control the music, won't allow us to license it."

He has no intention of seeing Let It Be, the new West End musical featuring Beatles hits. "Apparently there is not a single word of dialogue in it. Why did they allow that to happen? The cast don't look like the Beatles either, and they even had the arrogance to cast someone as Paul McCartney who doesn't play the guitar left-handed."

Russell is currently reworking an unfinished novel. "It is a fictional account of a playwright's life and is instead of me writing a memoir," he says. Earlier this month he performed a charity music gig at the Royal Albert Hall with Tim Firth, the co-writer of Calendar Girls. He has toured with a group of poets, is writing songs and studying painting and drawing.

"I don't have anything like the ambition I once had. Having enjoyed so much success, I now feel able to explore and experiment with all sorts of other creative things. If I have a day when I haven't done something new and creative, I feel really uneasy."

Questions for Exploration

- 1. In the headline, Russell says he wants 'to talk about the things that matter'. In five sentences, explain what you think those things are in relation to 'Blood Brothers'.**

2. Although her life is very different to Russell's mother, how could we compare her to Mrs J? Is Mrs J aspirational? (Look 'aspirational' up on Google for a definition, if needed.)

3. "I am very interested in nature versus nurture. When I look at myself or catch sight of a gesture I make and see my father... I also know I might have drunk myself to death at 30. Luckily, I was saved by my in-laws, who nurtured me." Which traits/characteristics might Mickey and Edward have picked up from their birth mother?

4. 'Russell left school at 15 with one O-level in English literature'. What do you know about the education system that you can link to this? Why wasn't it until he met his in-laws, who were 'professionals' that his prospects changed?

5. When he talks about the recent Beatles show in the West End, he comments, "Apparently there is not a single word of dialogue in it. Why did they allow that to happen?" How do you think Russell uses dialogue in Blood Brothers - why is it so important to him?

BBC NEWS MAGAZINE

THE ENGLISH CITY THAT WANTED TO BREAK AWAY FROM THE UK



Image copyright Dave Sinclair

Thirty years ago left-wingers in Liverpool, bitterly opposed to Margaret Thatcher, attempted to oppose central government and go their own way.

It's not just the accent that makes Liverpool feel a bit foreign to outsiders. Geographically and politically, Liverpool is a city on the edge of Britain.

At no time was this truer than in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Once the great port of the British Empire, Liverpool lost 80,000 jobs between 1972 and 1982 as the docks closed and its manufacturing sector shrank by 50%.

Screenwriter Jimmy McGovern recalls typing a CV for his brother in the early 1980s.

"From 1976 onwards it was this litany - Birds Eye, [Fisher] Bendix, Leyland, every one of them - reason for leaving: factory closed, factory closed, factory closed."

The unemployment and poverty caused by the collapse of Liverpool's economy produced the ideal recruiting ground for an ultra-left-wing movement operating within the Labour party. Known as the Militant Tendency, it had sprung from a Trotskyist group called the Revolutionary Socialist League and its goals included widespread nationalisation and embarking on a massive programme of public works.

One of its most influential figures in Liverpool was Derek Hatton, a former fire fighter who was elected to the city council in 1979.



Derek Hatton, militant Labour politician, leader of the regeneration of Liverpool

"There was a lot of anger around," Hatton remembers. "Thatcher had come to power and was taking more money off the local authority. So there was a mood in city, which was saying, 'Hang on a minute! What's going on here?'"

Militant supporters were elected to key positions within the Liverpool Labour Party and, in 1983, the same year that Mrs Thatcher won her second general election by a landslide, Labour won the city council elections on a radical socialist manifesto.

It immediately cancelled the 1,200 redundancies planned by the previous administration, froze council rents and launched an ambitious house-building programme targeting the city's most deprived neighbourhoods. Slums were torn down, new leisure centres and nurseries built and apprenticeships created.

The only problem was that the council did not have the cash to fund its projects. But one of Labour's election pledges had been to campaign for more money from central government. And Roy Gladden, a non-Militant Labour councillor both then and now, says the council was confident it could secure the funds it needed.

"In those days, you could negotiate more with government than councils can today. Then we thought we had a case because of the deprivation in the city. We hoped even the Thatcher government would see the need to protect its citizens and that Liverpool, whether they liked it or not, was part of the UK."

At first, the Liverpool Labour council's strategy worked. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Patrick Jenkin, visited Liverpool and was so shocked by the poor housing he saw, he awarded the city an extra £20m. But when the council asked the government for more money the following year, the answer was no.

"They didn't seem to have the right kind of feeling," says Gladden. "They were happy for us to have the factories and make the money that then got shifted to the south, to London. But when it came for that to be returned it didn't happen."

The decision confirmed the "outsider" status that many in the city already felt - among them the musician Peter Hooton, who was then a youth worker on one of Liverpool's poorest estates, Cantrill Farm. "When Thatcher was in power, we felt that she looked at Liverpool and thought: 'Well, they're not really English, are they?'"

"Liverpool has always seen itself as separate from the rest of the country. As a city, it has more in common with Belfast and Glasgow than it does with London. There was the big influx of Irish and, because it's a port, it's always been international. We look to America and Ireland - to New York and Dublin - more than we look to London."

"The mood was very similar to what it was during the Scottish referendum," says Hooton. "People were so politicised - including young people - they were discussing council policy in pubs. They knew the names of the chair of education and the chair of finance. There was no other city like it in that period."

Thirty years on, former militant politician Roy Gladden is once again a city councillor - at a time when what the Liverpool Labour council was trying to achieve may now be within reach.

"What we were trying to say at the time was: 'You can't sit in London telling us what's good for us. Give us the tools to sort our own problems out because we know what's best for our city.' What we were talking about then is what people have been talking about in Scotland." "The Scots are saying, 'Never mind government deciding what's good for us, we want to decide for ourselves.' Now that devolution argument has spread to England and you've got people in Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Leeds that are ready to make their own decisions. That's what we were saying 30 years ago."

Questions for Exploration

Look up these political words on Google and write their definition:

- Militant _____
- Radicalise _____
- Socialism _____
- Manifesto _____
- Devolution _____

1. How many jobs were lost in Liverpool between 1972 and 1982?

2. What was the name of the left-wing militant Labour group that set out to radicalise Liverpool?

3. After the Labour party won the election in Liverpool in 1983, the same year Margaret Thatcher won by a landslide in the UK overall, what changes did the radical group make in Liverpool?

4. Thirty years on, does the city feel differently to how it did back then?

Activity 7: Essay Preparation

You will be answering the following question:

How far does Russell present Mrs Lyons as an unlikeable character?

Complete the following **analytical verbs** to help you explore Mickey's authorial intent with Mickey's character. Authorial intent is when you explain **what** an author is doing and **why** they are doing it. The 'why' is extremely important and often missed out by students in their exams so that is what we are going to start with today. One has been done for you.

Russell may present Mrs Lyons as an unlikeable character:

- to warn
- to teach audiences about the dangers of ignorance and social superiority and how it can bring out the worst in people.
- to reveal the importance of
- to criticise
- to advocate

Pick three of your sentences from above and rewrite them below. This time, extend your sentences with the connectives 'because', 'but' or 'so'. Look at the example below to help you.

Russell may present Mrs Lyons as an unlikeable character **to teach** audiences about the dangers of social superiority and the way it can bring out the worst in people **so** she comes across as snobbish, selfish and a woman concerned only with the preservation of her relationship with Edward at the cost of the wellbeing of others.

1.

2.

3.

Pick one of the sentences above. Copy it out again. Extend it by using one analytical verb to lead in to a second analytical verb in order to explore more of Priestley's authorial intent. Look at the example below to help you.

Priestley may present Mrs Lyons as an unlikeable character **to teach** audiences about the dangers of capitalism and the way it can bring out the worst in people **so** she comes across as snobbish, selfish and a woman concerned only with the preservation of her relationship with Edward at the cost of the wellbeing of others. **Through teaching audiences this,** Russell may also be **advocating** social equality. If the audience dislike Mrs Lyons, a woman associated with snobbery and elitism, they are more likely to turn toward equality and away from social division.

1.

Write down five quotations you could use in your essay. They do not necessarily have to be spoken by Mrs Lyons herself. One has been done for you to give you a sixth quotation.

'You see, you see why I don't want you mixing with boys like that! You learn filth from them and behave like this like a, like a horrible little boy, like them. But you are not like them. You are my son, mine, and you won't..you won't ever...Oh my son...my beautiful, beautiful son.'

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Use your analytical verbs to quickly explain what Priestley is doing with each quotation. You do not need to write in full sentences as this is just a plan. Look at the example to help you.

Eg. 'We're in for a time of steady increasing prosperity' - **Exposing Birling, and by extension, all capitalists as being a group of people who are out of touch with reality.**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Activity 8: Writing like a Literary Critic

Identify the following in this example response which I have pre-prepared.

- Clear points at the beginning of each paragraph which relate to the question
- Embedded quotations
- Single word analysis
- Analytical verbs
- Authorial intent (what the writer is doing and why they are doing it.)
- Social/historical context

Pay close attention to how I am writing. You should aim to replicate this style of writing in your own

Russell makes Mrs Lyons an extremely unlikeable character, aligning her with the social division that is at the core of the tragedy of the play. From this audiences would sympathise with the characters for whom life is tougher, and therefore supporting Russell's view that such inequality is a social evil. She comes across as snobbish, selfish and a woman concerned only with self-preservation and the protection of her relationship with Edward at the cost of the wellbeing of others. At the beginning Russell uses her to teach audiences that money does not equal happiness, when she explains that her 'rather large' house feels very empty as she believed children would 'come along'. The adverb 'rather' highlights her social class, as it is a word used by middle or upper classes to quantify adjectives. Furthermore, the addition of the adjective 'large' exemplifies how comfortably money has enabled her to live and contrasts directly with the living situation of Mrs Johnstone, who has many children crammed into a tiny home that she does not even own. Russell may be criticising the social injustice of the housing problems in Liverpool, struggling to provide enough houses for the many in need as poverty was rife. An alternative interpretation may be that Russell tries to encourage sympathy for the character of Mrs Lyons, as her life is somehow void of purpose after children have not 'come along'. This verb phrase makes it sound like it was simply a matter of chance or luck, rather than a biological issue, which links to the theme of superstition and fate and perhaps foreshadows that even though Mrs Lyons mocked superstition in Mrs Johnstone at the beginning, inevitably, through desperation, she succumbs to the same beliefs, triggering the onset of the justice of her downfall. Perhaps, through teaching the audience about the roles fate, superstition and chance play in the characters life he is actually highlighting that we are all the same underneath and it is merely chance or fate that

answer.

Activity 8: Exam Question

Answer the following exam question. Use everything in this booklet to help you. If you need your copy of the text with you to help, you may use it but remember you will not have a copy in your real exam. Don't forget to include the following:

- Clear points at the beginning of each paragraph which relate to the question
- Quotations
- Single word analysis (You could use your analytical verbs here too. Eg. 'Russell has Mrs Lyons manipulate Mrs Johnstone's situation by ironically reminding her that she is 'already threatened by the welfare' to criticise...')
- Authorial intent (what the writer is doing and why they are doing it.)

- Social/historical context
- PETER structure

If you are unsure how to structure your essay, start with what Mrs Lyons is like at the beginning of the play and explain how she develops. Remember, the question is asking 'how far' Russell presents Mrs Lyons as unlikeable which means you need to make a decision and then use the essay to explain your thoughts. Is she very unlikeable, partially unlikeable or completely likeable? Why? Use the paragraph above to help you start if needed.

ANALYTICAL VERBS

advocates alludes to amplifies articulates asserts builds categorises characterises clarifies classifies collates	critiques defends depicts details develops differentiates elevates emphasizes employs establishes	expands expresses facilitates highlights identifies illustrates implies informs perpetuates persuades	portrays presents promotes proposes provokes raises recalls reduces relates reinforces	responds reveals shows states strengthens suggests supports underlines validates verifies
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CONNECTIVES

alternatively although before beneath beyond despite earlier equally especially finally	firstly for example for instance however indeed in the case of likewise moreover next on the other hand	particularly secondly significantly similarly throughout towards unless unlike whereas within
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EVALUATIVE ADVERBS FOR AUTHOR'S CRAFT

bitterly clearly deliberately effectively energetically gradually immediately indignantly intelligently	intensely interestingly powerfully predictably rapidly significantly skilfully slowly successfully swiftly
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WORDS TO DESCRIBE READER'S/AUDIENCE'S REACTION

absorbed alarmed amused appalled captivated disgusted	distraught drawn to encouraged excited fearful	hopeful horrified irritated nervous optimistic perplexed	repulsed saddened shocked suspicious sympathetic uncertain	uncomfortable upbeat worried
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How far does Russell present Mrs Lyons as an unlikeable character?

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]