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The play was written in 1981, first performed in 1982 and is set between the 50s and the 70s.

Find out what else was going on at these different times in the UK and elsewhere. These events may have inspired Russell.
Liverpool in the 20th century

By 1901 the population of Liverpool had reached 685,000. In 1904 the boundaries of the city were extended again to include Fazakerly.

The Tower Building was built in 1908. In the 1910s three of Liverpool’s most famous buildings were erected on the site of St George’s dock, which had been filled in. The Liver Building was built in 1911. The Cunard Building was built in 1916. The Port of Liverpool building was also built at that time. The Lady Lever art gallery opened in 1922.

More than 13,000 Liverpudlians died in World War I. In 1921 a memorial was erected outside the Cunard building to all the Cunard employees who died in the war.

In 1928 a survey showed 14% of the city’s population were living in poverty. This was, of course, much worse than what we would call poverty today. In those days poor people were living at bare survival level.

In 1934 the Queensway road tunnel was built. The Kingsway Road Tunnel followed in 1971.

In the early 20th century the city suffered a shortage of houses. Overcrowding was common, as was slum housing. The council built some council houses but nothing like enough to solve the problem. Furthermore Liverpool suffered severely in the depression of the 1930s and up to a third of men of working age were unemployed.

During World War II Liverpool was a target as it was, obviously, an important port. Some 3,875 people died in Merseyside and more than 10,000 houses were destroyed. Many more people were seriously injured and many more houses were damaged.

After World War II the council was faced with the task of replacing bombed houses. It also had to replace many slum houses. Like other cities Liverpool 'redeveloped' central areas of the city in the 1950s and 1960s and many new council houses and flats were built. Overspill towns were built near the city at Kirkby and Skelmersdale. Unfortunately demolishing terraced houses and replacing them with high rise flats broke up communities.

In 1974 the boundaries of the city were changed so it became part of an administrative area called Merseyside.

The Roman Catholic Cathedral was consecrated in 1967. The Anglican Cathedral was not completed until 1978.
In the later 20th century industries in Liverpool included engineering, cement manufacture, sugar refining and flour milling. For a time, in the 1950s and 1960s the local economy boomed but it turned sour in the late 1970s and 1980s as Liverpool, like the rest of the country suffered from recession. Liverpool became an unemployment black spot. One consequence of Liverpool’s social problems were the Toxteth riots of 1981.

In the last years of the 20th century there were some hopeful signs. Liverpool remains a very important port. Because of its position in the Northwest it is the main port for trading with North America. In the 1980s Albert Dock was redeveloped and turned into an area of bars, shops and restaurants.


Liverpool, because of its position on the River Mersey, was a prosperous seaport in the 19th century. It is a city of many contrasts. In the 20th century, because of the silting of the river, it was a place of financial depression, which led to unemployment and strikes. There was a big gap between the rich and the poor.

Liverpudlians are known for their warmth, hospitality and wit. Liverpool is also famous for its football teams and impact on culture – the Mersey Beat (poetry), the Beatles (music) and playwrights, architects etc. Mrs Johnstone’s wit and warmth typify these qualities.

Unemployment reached 25% in the 1980s. At the time the play is set, factories were closing down. At the start of act 2, Sammy is already on the dole, and the song ‘Take a Letter Miss Jones’ illustrates how this rising unemployment adversely affects Mickey’s life and tempts him into crime. Being out of work creates low self-esteem; particularly for traditional men who feel they need to support their family.

Blood Brothers is set in Liverpool, between the 1950s and the 1970s. At the time, people strongly disapproved of sex before marriage and this is why Mrs Johnstone ‘has to’ marry quickly. Divorce was uncommon and this is another reason the neighbours might disapprove of her.

Although the 1945 Education act had made grammar schools free, working class children had to pass the 11+ to gain entry to the grammar schools. The pass mark was kept deliberately high. Few children were allowed the privilege of a grammar school education, and even if they gained a place, there was no guarantee that they would leave with qualifications, as the school leaving age was 15.
Pupils at grammar schools studied academic subjects and took O levels. Some went on to take A levels, while others were under pressure from parents to leave school, get a job and bring money into the household. There were far fewer university places then, so most would go into employment after school. Children who failed the 11+ would go to a secondary modern school to be prepared for life in the trades. Boys would study practical skills like bricklaying, alongside academic work, and girls would learn how to cook. Many of these schools were under-funded.

If pupils were not considered ‘bright’ they were not allowed to take CSEs. These qualifications were not worth as much as O Levels, taken at grammar school. (GCSEs are much more inclusive) So it was common for children to leave school without any qualifications at all. It was more difficult for them to get on in life.

There is a clearly established link between poverty and under-achievement at school. Edward is sent to a private, fee-paying boarding school and will take O levels, A levels and go on to university.

Mickey leaves school and goes into employment; things go wrong when he is made redundant, whereas Edward has a much more secure ‘white collar’ job. Manual workers were called ‘blue collar’ workers; they were more affected by closure of factories and the scarcity of work connected with the docks.

Council houses were the homes of most working class people in the 1950s and 1960s. The terraced houses had a lot to recommend them, but they were also cramped and lacked inside toilets and bathrooms. They did not have central heating and were heated mostly by coal fires. Their inner city locations were often dirty and there was nowhere for children to play as they rarely had gardens.

To improve standards of living, the government moved people away from the terraced houses into new council accommodation in the countryside. ‘New’ towns were created like Skelmersdale, and existing places were developed, like Runcorn and Winsford. Some high rise blocks were built also.

Mrs Johnstone’s family is certainly helped by their move, although not as much as she had hoped. In many ways, it is already too late for the older children, and the unemployment situation was often worse away from the city. Also, many missed the people and the amenities that they had known before, and the support network that existed all but vanished. Uprooting people can cause stress and depression.

One of the playwright’s aims is to show us that there are disadvantages to being poor and working class. The failure to succeed in life is not because of a lack of ability, but a lack of opportunity. This can clearly be seen in Edward and Mickey. We must ask ourselves whether this is still true in the 21st century.
What is a Blood Brother?

- Friend
- Companion
- Soul mate
- Family

What does this pact involve?

- Commitment
- Dedication
- Devotion
- Promise
- Affection
- Care

- Loyalty
- Unconditional love
- Humour
- Kindness
- Sympathy
- Consideration

Blood Brother Questions

1) If you make a pact as a blood brother, what does it mean? (Page 101)

2) In what ways are Mickey and Eddie being drawn together? (98-102)

3) In both the Johnstone and the Lyons’ households the fathers are absent. Contrast the reasons for their absence. What do you think Willy Russell is suggesting about society and families?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for his absence.</th>
<th>Mr Lyons</th>
<th>Mr Johnstone</th>
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<td>P.82 p.103</td>
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The Prologue

Act 1 scene 1.

A Prologue:
- Passes on information about plot, character or theme to the audience.
- Acts as a blurb would in a book.
- Acts as a commentary to the play, allowing the author to pass on relevant information to the audience.
- Challenges the audience to think of particular issues.

Encourages audience to watch the play with certain expectations. Blood Brothers

Prologue:
- Discusses the birth, separation and death of the brothers.
- The fate of the brothers is decided before the story begins.
- We are left with the image of a distraught Mrs Johnstone.

ACTIVITY: How effective is the prologue?

(Use the PEE chain to structure your response)
Act One Questions

1. How does the narrator describe the Johnstone twins on page 1?

2. The narrator tells the story of the Johnstone twins in a form like the Prologue in *Romeo and Juliet*. Why do you think he does this?

3. What is Mrs Johnstone's job? Who does she work for?

4. Why does Mrs Lyons find her house 'rather large' (p.4)?

5. Find a quote on page 5 to suggest that having babies is a regular, constant thing for Mrs Johnstone.

6. How does Mrs Johnstone feel when the gynaecologist reveals that she is expecting twins (p.6-7)?

7. What does Mrs Lyons suggest Mrs Johnstone should do with the twins (p.7)?

8. How does Mrs Lyons persuade Mrs Johnstone to come round to her way of thinking? Look at Mrs Lyon's speeches on p.8-9.

9. What sort of agreement does Mrs Lyons make with Mrs Johnstone (p.11)?

10. Why does Mrs Lyons make Mrs Johnstone swear on the bible? Clue: Think about the situations in which people are normally made to swear on the bible.

11. Why do you think Mrs Lyons is agitated over Mrs Johnstone's fussing of the baby (p.15-16)?

12. What excuse does Mrs Lyons make to Mr Lyons about her not wanting Mrs Johnstone to hold the baby?
13. What does Mrs Lyons want £50 from Mr Lyons for?

14. What does Mrs Lyons say will happen if the twins ever learn of the truth (p.18)?

15. At page 18 in the play, who do you have the most sympathy for? Mrs Lyons or Mrs Johnstone? Explain your answer using quotes.

16. Where has Mickey been playing on page 20? Why isn't he allowed there?

17. How does Mickey refer to his mother on page 23? How does Edward refer to his mother on page 23? **Extension:** what does this suggest about the twins upbringing?

18. Why does Mickey call Edward 'soft' on page 23?

19. What does Sammy call Edward on page 27?

20. Why does Mrs Johnstone tell Mickey to get into the house when she meets Edward (p.28)?

21. Why do you think Mrs Lyons wants to move away (p.40)?

22. What present does Mrs Johnstone give to Edward before he moves away (p.46)?

23. List some of the benefits that Mrs Johnstone believes will happen when they move away (p.49-52).
Act Two Questions

1) List up to three things that happen to both Mickey and Eddie when they are fourteen.

2) Why will the audience find it funny that Edward tells his teacher “You can take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut! But you shall not take my locket!”? p.59

EXTENSION TASK A) Why will the audience find it touching that Edward tells his teacher “You can take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut! But you shall not take my locket!”? p.59

3) Why can’t Mickey ask Linda out in their early teens? Use a quote to support your answer?

4) Why can’t Edward get a girlfriend in his early teens?

5) Whose “Ma” is said to be “off her beam”?

6) Whose “Ma” is said to be “a fuckin’ head case.”

7) How do Linda and Mickey finally get together?

EXTENSION TASK B) What would be the audience reaction to Linda and Mickey finally getting together and Edward’s role in that event? Refer to the song “I’m Not Saying a Word” in your answer.

8) Do you agree with Mrs Johnstone’s statement to Mickey that he’s “…not had much of a life with me…” Give reasons for your answer.

9) How do you think Linda managed to “…our own place…” and a job for Mickey?

10) Create a table showing the advantages and disadvantages to Mickey and Linda of the method by which she secured their home and job.

11) What motivates Mickey to finally stop taking his pills?

12) What kind of finale is the ending of the play? (e.g. sad/surprising/engaging/upsetting/exciting) Give several reasons for your answer, referring to the audience reaction specifically.

EXTENSION TASK C) Did Linda behave in the right or wrong way at different moments in the play? Give reasons for your answer.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mrs Lyons</th>
<th>Mrs Johnstone</th>
<th>Evidence/ Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job or income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accent or way of speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style of Dress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of social Life</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambitions</td>
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</table>
Complete this grid, comparing the twins as they grow up. You must focus on:
Their homes/ Education and jobs/ Mothers, fathers and relationships/ The way they speak

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Mickey</th>
<th>Eddie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death:</td>
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Superstitions

1. a: belief or practice resulting from ignorance, fear of the unknown, trust in magic or chance, or a false conception of causation
   b: an irrational abject attitude of mind toward the supernatural, nature, or God resulting from superstition

2. A notion maintained despite evidence to the contrary

Superstitions about Death

- **BIRD**: A bird in the house is a sign of a death.
- **CANDLE**: Light candles on the night after November 1. One for each deceased relative should be placed in the window in the room where death occurred.
- **CEMETERY**: You must hold your breath while going past a cemetery or you will breathe in the spirit of someone who has recently died.
- **CLOCK**: If a clock which has not been working suddenly chimes, there will be a death in the family.
- **CORPSE**: If a woman is buried in black, she will return to haunt the family.
- **EYE**: If the left eye twitches there will soon be a death in the family.
- **MIRROR**: If a mirror in the house falls and breaks by itself, someone in the house will die soon.
- **MOTh**: A white moth inside the house or trying to enter the house means death.
- **PHOTOGRAPH**: If 3 people are photographed together, the one in the middle will die first.
- **THIRTEEN**: If 13 people sit down at a table to eat, one of them will die before the year is over.
- **UMBRELLA**: Dropping an umbrella on the floor means that there will be a murder in the house.

Superstitions about Weddings

Wedding Day Superstitions and Traditions

- **BRIDAL SHOWER**: The first gift the bride opens should be the first gift she uses.
- **WEDDING DAY**: Certain days of the week, and certain months of the year are better than others for a wedding.
  - Monday for health,
  - Tuesday for wealth,
  - Wednesday best of all,
  - Thursday for losses,
  - Friday for crosses,
  - Saturday for no luck at all
Married when the year is new, he'll be loving, kind & true,
When February birds do mate, You wed nor dread your fate.
If you wed when March winds blow, joy and sorrow both you'll know.
Marry in April when you can, Joy for Maiden & for Man.
Marry in the month of May, and you'll surely rue the day.
Marry when June roses grow, over land and sea you'll go.
Those who in July do wed, must labour for their daily bred.
Whoever wed in August be, many a change is sure to see
Marry in September's shrine, your living will be rich and fine.
If in October you do marry, love will come but riches tarry.
If you wed in bleak November, only joys will come, remember.
When December snows fall fast, marry and true love will last.

FOR A LUCKY BRIDE
Something old,
Something new,
Something borrowed,
Something blue,
And a lucky sixpence
In her shoe.

Married in White, you have chosen right
Married in Grey, you will go far away,
Married in Black, you will wish yourself back,
Married in Red, you will wish yourself dead,
Married in Green, ashamed to be seen,
Married in Blue, you will always be true,
Married in Pearl, you will live in a whirl,
Married in Yellow, ashamed of your fellow,
Married in Brown, you will live in the town,
Married in Pink, you spirit will sink.

WEDDING CAKE
If a single woman sleeps with a piece of wedding cake under her pillow, she will dream of her future husband.
Themes in 'Blood Brothers'

Superstition & Fate

Love & Friendship

Music & Dance

Families

Class

Childhood & Games

Nature vs. Nurture

Violence
THEMES

Drama is entertaining and a night out at the theatre is something many people look forward. Today, not realising what an interesting experience they are missing, of course, most people's experience of plays is not that of live acting at a theatre but the recorded and edited action of TV.

Plays are a unique and very special form of literature because they are based on a combination of language and action and are the vision of two important people: the playwright and the play's director this vision is coupled with the enormous hard work of a company of actors and back stage personnel. Plays are designed both to entertain by capturing the imagination and to persuade by capturing the mind.

Playwrights are often very political creatures who are particularly sensitive to what they perceive to be the wrongs of society. Their plays are often a vehicle not just for entertainment but for the expression of the playwright's ideas and concerns. These are called the play's themes. A modern televised play can stir the imaginations and consciences of millions of people and change minds in a way little else can. It is because of this that drama has always had the potential to be a radical form of literature indeed, in Shakespeare's day, many plays were banned or had to be performed secretly or outside of the city's legal limits to avoid censorship or worse: more than one playwright was imprisoned and worse for their work.

Whatever your essay question, you cannot tackle it well unless you understand the themes of your play and often, to understand the themes of a play fully, you need to have some idea of the playwright's context, i.e. the time, place and situation in which he or she lived and wrote: the aspects of their time and society that motivated and inspired them to write about what they have, in the way they have. Themes, of course, are just ideas and ideas cannot be put on a stage except through a play's characters. So, the study of a play always involves the study of who its characters are, what they do, how they do it, who they do it to, as well as what they say, how they say it and who to... that is, the action and language of the play!

CHARACTERS AND ACTION

A vital aspect of a play is its characters, what they do and what the audience come to think about them (are they sympathetic or antagonistic, for example?). Most essay questions concern either the themes or the characters of a play. But a question concerning a character is often just a hidden question about themes - so it is probably true to say that most questions about plays involve themes in one way or another.

Who a character is, what they say, how they say it, what other characters say about them, how other characters act around them and so forth all help to build up a character in the audience's mind.

Do you like a particular character?

Why? Do you empathise with him or her or even sympathise with their plight? If so, think about what it is that makes you feel this way perhaps some aspect of the way they are being treated by their society? This is a theme of the play. Your sympathy and
engagement with this character is persuading you to accepting the playwright's ideas or themes. And just because their society is, for example, Italy in the olden days, does not mean that the ideas are old hat. Society may have evolved technologically, but not always in other ways. Shakespeare's views on human relationships and Arthur Miller's views on society are, in many ways, still very valid today.

Do you dislike a particular character?

Again, why? What are they doing to be disliked? How are they being presented? Are they created as a stereotype - a kind of stock character? What ideas occur to you when you watch them? Again, these ideas are linked to the themes of the play.

STAGECRAFT

The effects and purposes behind the playwright's use of stagecraft are as important in your analysis and essay as the choices and uses of language. Always consider how what is said in a play fits in with the following aspects of stagecraft:

SETTING
Where and when the action occurs

COSTUME
How a character is dressed

ACTION
What a character does

UNFOLDING ACTION or STRUCTURE
The division of action into scenes and acts

The passing of time/ the introduction of a conflict / the build up to a climax of action/ the resolution of problems/ the use of disguise/ the use of coincidence/ the use of dance, music and song

DRAMATIC IRONY
This is the commonest and often most important dramatic device used by a playwright to engage and involve the audience in their play. Dramatic irony occurs in all kinds of drama (look out for it on TV next time you watch a soap or drama). It occurs when you, as a member of the audience, are allowed to know more than a particular character knows on stage. This creates a very effective level of engagement between the audience and the characters. Members of the audience become involved in the action because they feel they ought to 'step in' and help the character - but obviously they cannot. This creates tension and involvement - and even sympathy.

- Do you remember the use of dramatic irony in childhood pantomimes when you actually could shout out to a character in a play, 'Watch out - he's behind you!'?
Plot
The plot of the story is simply the things that happen in the novel. This will be the basic events of the text. There can also be a sub-plot which is a less important part of the story. Nearly always, however, the sub-plot has some connections with the main plot and helps the text to reach its conclusion. This is the least important to look at in your assignment as it is just description - we’re looking for analysis so just describe the plot in two sentences as part of your introduction.

Genre
The genre of a story/ extract is, like plot, something minor to be included in your introduction very briefly - USUALLY! The exceptions could be, for example, a tragedy. Here, you would be expected to consider genre more - perhaps evaluating how far it meets the usual conventions of that genre. Horror/ Crime/ Romance/ Comedy/ Biography etc.

Always consider author intentions and impact on the reader

Theme
What are the themes/ issues of the text?
What does the author want their reader to contemplate/ consider/ examine?
Themes are the moral/ message behind a piece of writing.
Subjects of writing are:
war/ courage/ love/ evil/ deception
Themes of writing are:
innocence can lead to deception/ evil is within all of us

Structure
This is how the text is put together - it can include sentence structure as well as the order of events. Both of these have a huge impact on the way a story is received by the reader so will have been yet another conscious decision made by our author that you should seek to analyse. Look out for flashbacks/ tense changes in particular. Are they creating tension/ suspense with the structure?
How does the sentence structure reflect our characters’ narrator’s minds?
Setting

Settings are crucial to a story and are often used to reflect the inner turmoil or emotions of our characters. Think about time and place—time of day, year, life, where? who? They may change throughout your text—examine them alongside language to use to consider how the author has portrayed these settings. Consider what relevance they have to the events taking place.

Characters

What characters do we meet in the text? What are the relationships between the characters? What do we find out about them? How might this be relevant to the rest of the story/extract? How has the author introduced/developed the characters? Use language to help your analysis of this.

Narrative Strategy

A lot of how a story is received comes from HOW it is told and by whom.

**Person:** 1<sup>st</sup> person: I, me, my, mine
Tells the story through their eyes and is more personal/intimate
Can be an obstacle to getting an overall view as they’re too close to events

**Person:** 3<sup>rd</sup> person: he, she, they
Usually an omniscient perspective

**Split narrative:** varies the perspective more and is still omniscient
Both of these create a kind of dramatic irony—where the audience (reader) know more than the characters

**Tense:** Think about the effect of the tense your text is written in: past/present/future

PEE

Make a **point**
Wells uses language effectively to set the scene at the beginning of The Cone.

Give **evidence** or an **example**
The use of the words ‘red, rimmed’, ‘burnt, bright’ and ‘stood, stiff’ all contribute to the visual impression of the story for the reader.

Give a further **explanation**
Although on the surface it is a pleasant scene, there is in an indication that the sinister lies behind the Summer’s day. Wells wants to create suspense for the reader in this thriller.

Context

This should be integrated throughout your analysis and needs to be relevant. You may like to consider the author’s background, their other work, other writing at the time, theoretical approaches, events at the time of writing and critical appreciation and views. This is ESSENTIAL to any good analysis and is the part that will require the most additional research.
## Analysing Language

| **Alliteration** | Where consonants are repeated. It’s often used in poetry to give a nice pattern to a phrase.  
*E.g. Sally’s slipper slipped on a slimy slug.* |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Assonance**    | When words share the same vowel sound, but the consonants are different.  
*E.g. Lisa had a piece of cheese before she went to sleep, to help her dream.* |
| **Contrast**     | When two things are described in a way which emphasises how different they are.  
*E.g. Two garbagemen in red plastic blazers/ The man in a hip three-piece linen suit* |
| **Empathy**      | When someone feels like they understand what someone else is experiencing and how they feel about it.  
*E.g. As the day wore on at work, I felt a cramp beginning to form at the nape of my neck, my eyes began to feel droopy, and the computer screen in front of me began blurring.* |
| **Imagery**      | Language that creates a picture in your mind, bringing the text to life.  
*E.g. Though I was on the sheer face of a mountain, the feeling of swinging through the air was euphoric, almost like flying without wings.* |
| **Metaphor**     | A way of describing something that it is something else, to create a vivid image.  
*E.g. His eyes were deep, black, oily pools.* |
| **Personification** | A special kind of metaphor where you write about something as if it’s a person with thoughts and feelings.  
*E.g. The sea growled hungrily.* |
| **Repetition**   | Where a word/ phrase is repeated to emphasise a point or idea.  
*E.g. We want freedom by any means necessary. We want justice by any means necessary.* |
| **Simile**       | A way of describing something by comparing it to something else, usually by using the words like/ as.  
*E.g. He was as pale as the moon/ Her hair was like a bird’s nest* |
| **Stereotype**   | An inaccurate, generalised view of a particular group of people.  
*E.g. a stereotype of football fans might be that they’re all hooligans* |
| **Symbolism**    | When an object stands for something else.  
*E.g. a candle might be a symbol of hope/ a dying flower might be the end of a relationship* |
Analysing Structure

- **exposition** — presentation of needed facts, i.e., introduction of setting, characters, and background information, usually at the beginning of the story
- **initial incident** — that event in the plot which sparks the main action in the story
- **rising action** — conflict between protagonist and antagonist unfolds and grows more intense
- **anti-climax** — a high point in the action that is less powerful or important than the climax; not all stories have anti-climaxes
- **suspense** — keeps us interested, we want to know what happens next, and is greatest when reader's curiosity is combined with anxiety about the fate of some sympathetic character
- **foreshadowing** — hinting what will happen next; creates sense of necessity, or inevitability or fate
- **flashback** — present events recall past events
- **climax** — conflict’s outcome; the highest point of suspense when one of the conflicting forces usually wins out over the other
- **denouement** — all events occurring from the end of the story to the climax
- **falling action** — events which occur after the climax
- **outcome** — a statement about the result of the conflict
Effective Reading/Note-making Strategies

Note-making

Understanding
Focus
Making links

Revision
Referencing
Ideas
Organising

Helps
Writing
Planning

Exam
Revision
Writing
Memory

Effective note-making checklist

- Brief and simple
- Organised in a file-dated
- Your words
- Wide margin and spaces
- Use colour/images/symbols/highlights/boxes
- Use abbreviations

This is NOT note-taking!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMBOL</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>w/</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w/o</td>
<td>without</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w/t</td>
<td>within</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.e.</td>
<td>that is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>for example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>et cetera, so forth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/c</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b/t</td>
<td>before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>re:</td>
<td>regarding, about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esp.</td>
<td>especially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>min.</td>
<td>minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>max.</td>
<td>maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p./p.</td>
<td>page/pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@</td>
<td>at</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use boxes/colours/symbols/highlights in a way that suits you/the subject
Create your own abbreviations/com as long as you know it

L - Lead
I - Ideas
S - Summarise
T - Talk
E - End
N - Notes

Lead: prepare ahead of time
Ideas: identify main points/ideas
Summarise: in your own words - 24 hrs
Talk: ideas/questions/thoughts
End: review gaps in knowledge
Notes: key words/phrases/points

Reading Strategies to Accompany Note Making

SQ3R
1. Survey headings chapters sections contents
2. Question Have questions in your mind - what do I want to find out? What am I hoping to achieve?
3. Read Quickly to discover the main ideas
   2/3 times quickly rather than 1 slowly
   No notes - just underline or highlight
4. Recall At the end of the section/chapter/ write notes from memory
5. Review Check the accuracy of your notes and go back to add anything missing

The Cornell Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Ideas</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Record Reduce Reflect
Five Rs for note-making
Recite Review

23
1. Main idea
   a) Sub-point
   - info
   c) Sub-point
   - info

2. Main idea
   a) Sub-point

---

**The Outline**

**Method**

These notes have been reviewed, ordered and numbered, connections and extra details have also been added.

**Sticky notes**

Write down all the main points on sticky notes as you read and order them afterwards.

**Glossary**

Keep your own glossary as you read, list key terms and their definitions with examples too.

**Pre-reading tasks are valuable for planning ahead.**

- Read the title/look at the cover/look at the contents pages—what will this text be about?
- Flip through some pages—what things jump out at you? Note down specific pages—what do you think you will gain from looking at this book?
- Can you make any connections to your own knowledge or to other things you have read?
- Does this grab your interest immediately or not? Explore how it gives this reaction.

**Use a spider diagram format to place information from a text.**

**Make a list of all letters in the alphabet and try to think of a key word you’ve gained from reading that would connect to your topic.**

---

**Title:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Feature</th>
<th>My Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read the title/look at the cover/look at the contents pages—what will this text be about?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flip through some pages—what things jump out at you? Note down specific pages—what do you think you will gain from looking at this book?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you make any connections to your own knowledge or to other things you have read?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this grab your interest immediately or not? Explore how it gives this reaction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Using Quotes in Essays**

Incorporate shorter quotes into your sentences. Longer quotes need to be set apart as the examples below indicate:

Today, I am really looking forward to the weekend, ‘I’m so excited and I just can’t hide it!’ I have some old school friends coming to stay.

Nursing homes are in a dire condition according to David Cameron:

‘Our elderly should be a priority but they are not. Everyone is entitled to a certain quality of care; they deserve it more than anyone.’

This essay will consider how this can be achieved.

**PEE** can be used to structure paragraphs
You should make a point
You should then find appropriate evidence or an example
You should then add further explanation

Here are some examples:

**Make a point**
Shakespeare uses language to emphasise the theme of honesty in the play.

**Give evidence or an example**
The word ‘honesty’ is used frequently in Act 3 Scene 1 in order to create dramatic irony for the audience as the protagonist is consistently referred to as ‘honest Iago’.

**Give a further explanation**
Julian Abernethy viewed Shakespeare’s use of the word an irritant yet the word does seem crucial in highlighting Iago’s evil actions and Othello’s lack of knowledge. An audience at the time, looking for entertainment, would have delighted in the irony of its usage in the closing scenes of the play as they awaited the conclusion.

**Quoting**
**Round brackets:** separates additional information.

**Square brackets:** can be used in quotes to add in your own words; making sense of a quote:

‘He [Othello] is all consumed by jealousy which proves fatal.’ (Tyreman, 2011)

**Ellipsis (omission marks):** can be used to indicate you have omitted something from a quote

‘Othello has an all-consuming jealousy... that is the ultimate cause of his downfall.’
INTRODUCTION

This will show you have grasped what the question requires.

State the aim or purpose of the essay.

Indicate the issues you intend to develop - this will show you have planned and structured your essay.

State particular techniques you may use to explore the issues.

Define any key words.

BODY OF THE ESSAY

Each main point is developed within each paragraph.

Start with a topic sentence, to express the main idea of each.

Each point will be explained, discussed, clarified, analysed, give examples of...

Paragraphs have a beginning, middle and end

Each paragraph should be linked

Decide on the order of your points and paragraphs

Link to the title throughout!

CONCLUSION

Sum up the main points - by:

Referring to the relevance of your essay to the question or title - DO THIS THROUGHOUT.

Pick up themes from your introduction and demonstrate how these have been developed.

Draw attention to the main points in the essay.

Be concise.

Give your final thoughts. Don’t end sitting on the fence!
Using Quotations to Support Your Opinions:

Listed below are statements about the play of Blood Brothers. Your task is to read the statements, then find the quotation from the play and write it in the evidence box-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Johnstone is a superstitious woman.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Lyons is a cold and manipulative character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickey completely idolises Edward.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Lyons is a hard-hearted employer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynda is a warm and loyal character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward is a compassionate and generous character.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The prologue acts to inform the audience of events to follow.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Johnstone’s role is to explain events and inform the audience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sammy Johnstone is a truly evil character</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing about a play

Plays (and musicals) are for the stage and not the page! Remember this! It has been written to entertain a live audience NOT a reader.

What the audience sees as well as hears - stage action and setting - must be at the heart of your analysis and discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAY FOCUSED ON THE PLAY'S DRAMATIC ASPECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be sure to consider the <strong>methods used</strong>, the <strong>effects created</strong> and the <strong>purposes intended</strong> of the following dramatic aspects:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage entrances and exits (i.e. timing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positioning, action and interaction of characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses of props and costumes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The key device of dramatic irony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure: the effects of sequences of action, a key plot device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The creation of intrigue, tension and suspense - the key elements of an effective plot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses of asides and soliloquies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another pitfall to avoid...

**Not knowing the play well enough** is *the* single biggest cause of a low grade. Fortunately, it's easily resolved... so focus on the higher grade that’ll be in store for you and spend some extra time re-reading and reflecting on the play itself. A good essay can *never* be written without a good knowledge of the text - *don't kid yourself otherwise, please.*
What is it that gains most marks?

Interpretation

When you interpret the action and dialogue of a play, you are finding, explaining and discussing the methods, effects and purposes of the layers of meaning that exist beyond the surface meaning.

Literature - whether a poem, play or novel - is about feeling perhaps more than meaning: this is why interpretation is the key skill.

To uncover these different layers of meaning, you will need to consider the what, how and why of such things as the mood being created, the way a character is being portrayed through dialogue and action, etc., how the stage setting (i.e. the time, place and context) adds to the play in subtle but important ways, and how the events (plot), stage action and dialogue all work to help develop and explore the play's themes. All of these are covered in detail later.

It's important to realise that interpretation is not about facts. An interpretation is, by its very nature, an opinion - a point of view. This is why examiners are not keen to read the opinions of others - those of your teacher or those taken from a study guides, for example; examiners like to read about individual ideas - your ideas. These are always rewarded more highly. Alternative interpretations should be considered in a single essay therefore discussing ideas with your peers can help you develop a higher level response to the play.

Consider interpretations of a modern day audience as well as an audience back when it was first performed.

**BIRLING:** Well, it's my duty to keep labour costs down, and if I'd agreed to this demand for a new rate we'd have added about twelve per cent to our labour costs. Does that satisfy you? So I refused. Said I couldn't consider it. We were paying the usual rates and if they didn't like those rates, they could go and work somewhere else. It's a free country, I told them.

Priestley gives Birling the kind of language that he hopes would set him out in the audience's mind as a profiteering capitalist, words such as 'duty', 'labour costs' and 'usual rates'. His manner on stage and his dress would add to the air of arrogance that Priestley wants to convey. At this stage of the play, the audience will be well aware of the kind of 'duties' that Birling obviously doesn't recognise as important: his duty to pay his workers a fair and living wage.

The workers, in Birling's terms, don't ask for more, they make 'demands'; and again, Priestley's choice of language helps underpin the 'them and us' attitude factory owners such as Birling have towards their workers. There is no sense of compassion or community here, features that Priestley saw as vital to a healthy society.

Birling's use of the term 'free country' is clearly ironic: he himself might enjoy a good deal of freedom but his workers know very little thanks in large part to the near enslavement of the low wages he pays and the lack of alternatives available to them, despite his claim to the contrary that 'they could go and work somewhere else.' The way Priestley ends Birling's speech so emphatically with 'I told them' itself adds to the irony - having to be told you're free suggests very much that the opposite is the reality.

Finally, in these few lines, Birling uses the first-person pronouns 'I' and 'my' no less than five times thus emphasising his self-centred nature.
## Useful Essay Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence suggests...</th>
<th>Drawing on...</th>
<th>The insight that...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeks to demonstrate...</td>
<td>There is an implicit assumption...</td>
<td>The question of...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...has pointed to...</td>
<td>Studies strongly suggest...</td>
<td>Previous research suggests...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As can be seen...</td>
<td>Adding weight to the argument...</td>
<td>Previous studies have tended to focus...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The findings suggest/indicate...</td>
<td>There is growing emphasis...</td>
<td>Different interpretations... to some... to others...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to the approach...</td>
<td>While it may be the case...</td>
<td>It has long been recognised...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some commentators have emphasised... In this context.</td>
<td>It is well documented...</td>
<td>Results show...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing research generally leads to...</td>
<td>It is widely believed...</td>
<td>In marked contrast to...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Descriptive writing vs. Critical analytical writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive writing</th>
<th>Critical analytical writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>States what happened</td>
<td>Identifies the significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States what something is like</td>
<td>Evaluates the strengths and weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives the story so far</td>
<td>Weighs one piece of information against another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States the order of things</td>
<td>Makes reasoned and justified judgements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Says how to do something</td>
<td>Argues a case according to evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains what a theory says</td>
<td>Shows why something is relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains how something works</td>
<td>Discusses the best way to do something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes the methods used</td>
<td>Evaluates whether something is appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say when something occurred</td>
<td>Identifies why the timing is importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States different components</td>
<td>Weighs up the component parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States opinions</td>
<td>Gives reasons for selecting each option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lists details</td>
<td>Evaluates connections between information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lists in any order</td>
<td>Structure information in order of importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States the links between items</td>
<td>Determines the relevance of links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives information</td>
<td>Draws conclusions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Include bits of both

Aim for lots of this!
### Connectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Examples</strong></th>
<th><strong>Listing Points</strong></th>
<th><strong>Comparison</strong></th>
<th><strong>Changing Topic</strong></th>
<th><strong>Contrasting</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example</td>
<td>firstly, secondly, finally</td>
<td>Compared with...</td>
<td>Turning to...</td>
<td>However</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For instance</td>
<td>In the first place</td>
<td>in comparison with</td>
<td>As regards...</td>
<td>On the other hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Such as</td>
<td>To begin with</td>
<td>Similarly</td>
<td>With regard to</td>
<td>although...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. as shown by</td>
<td>On top of this</td>
<td>In the same way</td>
<td>Concerning...</td>
<td>Despite this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... as is shown by</td>
<td>In addition to this</td>
<td>Likewise</td>
<td>As far as... is concerned</td>
<td>On the contrary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take the case of</td>
<td>More importantly</td>
<td>Equally</td>
<td>Moving on to...</td>
<td>Instead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This can be proven by</td>
<td>also</td>
<td>As with</td>
<td>Now to consider...</td>
<td>As for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... as well</td>
<td>Are similar in that...</td>
<td>By contrast</td>
<td>... whereas...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Furthermore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>... while...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Another</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not only... but also</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

☆ Use these words to improve the quality of your extended writing/sentences
☆ Using connectives helps you develop the points that you make and effectively lead into your evidence.

### Emphasising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Emphasising</strong></th>
<th><strong>Cause and Effect</strong></th>
<th><strong>Re-phrasing</strong></th>
<th><strong>Concession</strong></th>
<th><strong>Summing up</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mainly</td>
<td>so...</td>
<td>In other words</td>
<td>Although...</td>
<td>In conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>As a result of...</td>
<td>That is...</td>
<td>While it is true that...</td>
<td>In summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>... because...</td>
<td>To put it more</td>
<td>Despite the fact that...</td>
<td>To sum up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfortunately</td>
<td>This means that...</td>
<td>simply</td>
<td>In spite of...</td>
<td>Overall...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most often</td>
<td>Due to the fact that...</td>
<td></td>
<td>Despite this...</td>
<td>On the whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... due to...</td>
<td></td>
<td>However... yet</td>
<td>In short...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>therefore</td>
<td></td>
<td>Still...</td>
<td>In brief...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... caused...</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nevertheless...</td>
<td>To conclude...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This caused...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>So, to round off...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32
1. Understand the Question
   - Do you know what the question means?
   - What type of essay do you need to write?
   - Compare and Contrast?
   - Descriptive?
   - Persuasive?
   - Argumentative?
   - Opinion?
   - Discussion?

2. Break the Question Down
   - Turn the question into a number of smaller questions that need to be answered before the main question is answered.

3. Do your Research
   - You need to become an expert on the essay topic.
   - Read the text
   - Is there any information you need to find out?
   - Write down quotations and where they come from

4. Plan your Answer
   - Decide how many paragraphs you need to answer the questions from step 2
   - Decide on the points you need to include in each paragraph

5. Introduction
   - An interesting fact
   - An important piece of info
   - A quotation
   - A definition or explanation of word(s) in the question
   - A rhetorical question
   - Get to the point & be specific
   - Let the reader know what your essay is about

6. P.E.E.
   - Each paragraph must include:
     - Point
       - Make a brief point which answers one of your questions from step 2
       - This will tell the reader what the topic of the paragraph is
     - Evidence
       - Select one or more quotations that back up your point
       - This is where you prove that your point is fact and not opinion
       - Put in brackets after the quotation where you found it
     - Explain
       - Now explain what your quotation means and how it backs up your point
       - Make a clear transition between each paragraph, using connectives

7. Conclusion
   - Recap your main ideas
   - Give your opinion
   - No new ideas
   - An interesting thought
   - A powerful image
   - A provoking quotation

8. Proofread
   - Read it backwards as well as forwards - flow and structure
   - Get someone else to read it but not rewrite it for you
   - Polish your language using a thesaurus; use synonyms!
## Unit 3 Assessment Criteria: Studying written language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose.</th>
<th>Develop and sustain interpretations of writers’ ideas and perspectives.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 marks</td>
<td>Nothing written, or what is written is totally irrelevant to text or not worthy of credit.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Band 1</strong></td>
<td>Candidates: make limited attempt to respond to whole texts; can identify in a limited way some aspects of content, characters or situation and will rely on narrative.</td>
<td>Candidates: show limited response to the main events of the whole text; show limited awareness of explicit meanings and ideas and significant features of characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-7 marks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Band 2</strong></td>
<td>Candidates: make some attempt to respond to texts; can identify some aspects of content, characters or situation, but may still rely on narrative.</td>
<td>Candidates: show response to significant characters, relationships and main events; show awareness of explicit meanings and ideas and significant features of characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-15 marks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Band 3</strong></td>
<td>Candidates: can describe the main ideas and themes; make a personal response; begin to select relevant and apt detail; begin to probe the sub-text.</td>
<td>Candidates: refer to specific aspects or details when justifying their views; show basic awareness of how texts achieve their effects through the writers’ use of language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-23 marks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Band 4</strong></td>
<td>Candidates: can understand and demonstrate how meaning and information are conveyed in texts; select and evaluate textual details appropriately; probe texts confidently.</td>
<td>Candidates: make personal and critical responses, referring to specific aspects of language, grammar and structure to justify their views; convey ideas clearly and appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-31 marks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Band 5</strong></td>
<td>Candidates: make cogent and critical responses; choose textual references carefully and are able to comment fully on the significance of particular words, phrases and stylistic features; make subtle and discriminating links.</td>
<td>Candidates: showoriginality of analysis and interpretation when evaluating patterns and details of words and images; are able to evaluate and comment on characters/relationships and attitudes/motives; at the highest level, consistently handle texts with confidence, have an overview and convey ideas cogently and make assured analysis of stylistic features.</td>
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<td>32-40 marks</td>
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Sample Essay

Task: How does this extract show similarities and differences between Edward and Mickey and hint that the past is not buried? (pp. 50-54 (exit of narrator))

This extract shows parallel scenes of both Edward and Mickey at school and comes from Act 2. Russell cleverly cuts between them so that the audience can see how the boys’ lives seem to be running parallel, as both get into trouble at school. There is also strong dramatic irony present as Mrs Lyons questions her son about his locket. The scene also moves the plot along, as it is because of both boys being suspended that they meet up again. Themes of education, class differences, love and the past all feature, and Russell also uses humour to keep us entertained.

Edward’s school scene shows how well he is doing: ‘talk of Oxbridge’, however the teacher shows him no respect and taunts him for wearing a locket. Edward is threatened with a flogging, which reminds us of the harsh regime in schools then. He values the locket so much that he commits a very funny act of impertinence to distract the teacher. He says: ‘You can take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut’. This outrageous rudeness causes a laugh in the theatre because it is impossible and incongruous. The alliteration and the assonance of the o sound heighten the humour by drawing attention to the words.

The contrast with Mickey’s school is stark. Here we see a teacher trying to control a bored and inattentive class. The teacher does not want to hear the answer, as he calls Perkins, who knows the answer a ‘boring little turd’. Mickey wasn’t listening and cannot see how the topic on the Boro Indians’ diet, will help him get a job. He has a point, especially as unemployment was rising at the time, but the teacher suspends both Mickey and Linda, who supports him. Mickey’s education is not going to get him to ‘Oxbridge’ like Edward’s. He is at a less prestigious secondary modern school. Russell is making the point that class differences are unfair and although the twins are identical, Edward is having all the opportunities and Mickey none.

However, Mickey does have the chance of a girlfriend, although he is more embarrassed than grateful as Linda loses no opportunity of telling him, in assembly, in class and in front of his friends. Edward, however, does not have an opportunity to meet girls, so potentially Mickey is
happier in his personal life. The scene with Mrs Lyons links to both themes as Mrs Lyons is convinced that Edward’s locket holds a picture of a ‘girlfriend’. The dramatic irony is strong here as she mistakes the child Mickey with her ‘son’: When were you photographed with that woman?’. We can see that she too is haunted by the past and that Edward is unaware of her secret. Edward also shows that she is unstable: ‘you’re not ill again, like you used to be…’. It is ironic that he says he never looked a bit like Mickey, as we know they started out as twins and Mrs Lyons can see the resemblance, yet Edward does not pick up on it. The locket also acts as a visible reminder of the past and a link with the previous act. Just as before when Edward risked worse trouble rather than give up the locket, it shows how important Mickey is to him.

The narrator helps to bring out these points clearly for the audience. He enters when Mrs Lyons is alone on stage and the tune and words take us back to ‘Shoes on the Table’, which brings in the themes of superstition and guilt. The narrator’s use of rhyme, metaphor and rhetorical question serve to separate his points from the episodic scenes, and draw them together for the audience. The recurrent motifs of the broken mirror, the knocking on the door and the devil pursuing the guilty all combine to show how haunted Mrs Lyons feels.

Russell effectively shows in this extract that Edward has a more privileged schooling and more prospects in life, but he is denied the chance to meet girls easily and his relationship with his mother is awkward as she is far too protective. The past is still making its presence felt and the scenes about the boys are carefully matched so that they seem to be doing similar things at similar times. Both rebel against school and Edward is learning to keep secrets from his mother to protect her. Dramatic irony is used to show that the past will keep on coming to the surface and once again the narrator, through a familiar song, reminds us of key themes.

Read the essay. Use the margin to make notes on what you think the candidate is showing knowledge of. Decide what grade you think this should be awarded. A useful rule of thumb is D- just telling the story C- making points which show understanding and selecting quotations to back them up B- C skills plus ability to explore, or have several ideas about the same point A – some discussion of HOW as well as WHAT – i.e. looking at style etc A* - all of the above but with a WOW factor which makes the reader realise the playwright’s skill.

How could this essay be improved?

Then try writing a plan to reduce this essay into.