



Scheme of work: A-level English Language and Literature 7707 - *Dramatic Encounters*

This scheme of work covers *Dramatic Encounters*, part of the subject content for A-level English Language and Literature 7707. It is not prescriptive and teachers are encouraged to adapt the material so it is appropriate and engaging for the students they teach. It offers suggested approaches for teaching around the different topics, drawing upon key learning, concepts and analytical skills.

In this part of the subject content, students should be encouraged to engage with drama from a perspective both as text and as performance. They should do this by exploring the linguistic choices chosen for characterisation, the 'conversational' aspects of the dramatic genre in the representation of speech and the playwright's selection of stagecraft techniques. They should consider how these aspects highlight areas of conflict in relation to themes and characters. Students should also be taught to consider important contextual aspects relevant to the production and reception of the play.

To find out more about our AS and A-level English Language and Literature specification, visit [aqa.org.uk/7707](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7707).

Introduction

Students study one of four set texts chosen from:

- *Othello* by William Shakespeare
- *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller
- *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams
- *The Herd* by Rory Kinnear

Key concepts for the unit

Genre: a way of grouping texts based on expected shared conventions (here specifically the conventions of drama)

Characterisation: the range of strategies that authors and readers use to build and develop characters

Interaction: the ways in which playwrights present characters speaking or acting in response to others for dramatic effect

Speech acts: the forms and functions associated with particular utterances and types of speech

Politeness strategies: the distinctive ways in which speakers avoid threatening face in interaction

Assumed coverage

Dramatic encounters is an A-level topic and is not examined at AS level. If students are entering the A-level only, then this part of the subject content can be taught at any point. However, if students are entering for both the AS and A-level *Dramatic encounters* should be taught in the second year. Covering this subject content in the second year also allows for AS and A-level students to be co-taught in the first year. It is assumed that approximately 8-10 weeks would be spent in the study of the play, comprising of about 4.5 hours classroom contact per week.

Prior knowledge

Language levels appropriate for the study of spoken language, specific linguistic features of spoken language from the study of transcripts and represented speech features in a variety of texts and genres.

Week 1

The representation of speech in drama

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• revise features of spoken discourse• identify the ways that playwrights represent speech in drama• explore the similarities and differences between plays and transcripts.	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to their set text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discourse as a language level:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• structure of talk and turn taking• non-fluency• overlaps and interruptions• feedback• topic management.• Matching spoken discourse features with playwrights' representation of discourse (eg prosody, non-fluency and turn taking) through graphological devices (eg ellipsis).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students analyse selected extracts to explore different ways of representing speech.• Students compare spontaneous speech and monologues/anecdotes with dialogue and scripted monologues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to undertake further work exploring transcription skills and the representation of spontaneous speech using extracts from other texts.• Students could complete creative activities such as: writing dialogue for a play (individual or group work); writing monologues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extracts from set texts and from works by other playwrights from different time periods• Sources of spontaneous speech: transcripts from AQA Anthology: Paris; AQA past papers; students' own recordings• Phones/data recording equipment

Week 2

Conflict

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider the key questions relating to interaction, power and positioning explore how conflict is presented in different genres and mediums investigate key contextual factors that affect production and reception of the play. 	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to their set text:</p> <p>Focusing on key questions in the specification eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do people interact? How do people claim power and position others in talk? Contexts as social, cultural, historical, linguistic, authorial, editorial The contexts of a play as text and performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students debate the key questions in the specification – groups to contribute ideas for all the questions (posters). Students either watch selected clips or role play scenarios from spontaneous speech. Students analyse the representation of conflict in soap operas and reality TV shows drawing attention to key features and exploring patterns and similarities. Ask students to research their set play for: biographical information for playwright; key historical events; social contexts of the time. Students then present their ideas to the whole group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The key questions could be discussed for how aspects of interaction and power could be represented physically on a stage eg how people claim power could be discussed in terms of non-verbal communication, or the proxemics of the characters to each other on the stage. Differentiation could be achieved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the groups selected the complexity of research topics given to different groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TV Clips (eg <i>Question Time</i>, Interview shows, post-match football interviews with managers etc) Poster paper Worksheets with scenarios Presentation software (eg PowerPoint /Prezi)

Week 3

Dramatic conventions

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify the structures of and divisions used in the dramatic genre explore the function of the divisions and relevance to meaning. 	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to the set drama text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aristotelian conventions narrative theory prototypical structures of drama tragic conventions monologues, soliloquies and asides (Shakespearian conventions of verse and prose and types of modern dramas, if applicable). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students explore the play's structure by summarising key action in scenes/acts and linking to theories that they have read about. They can then create a chart to show the various stages of narrative in their set text, and any examples of tragic conventions used. Additional work can be completed on the dramatic use and functions of monologues/soliloquies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension reading for students could include: critical interpretation of play or theatrical style eg Susan C W Abbotson, <i>A Student Handbook to the Plays of Arthur Miller: All My Sons, Death of a Salesman</i> etc, Bloomsbury; Rosemary O'Shea, <i>Tennessee Williams', A Streetcar Named Desire</i>, Insight Publications; Philip Kolin (editor), <i>Othello Critical Essays (Shakespeare Criticism)</i>, Routledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A3 poster paper to represent narrative structure Summaries of conventions and theories eg Mick Short's model of dramatic discourse

Week 4

Stagecraft

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse the choices of stagecraft techniques/elements. 	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to the set drama text:</p> <p>Key elements of stagecraft such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> set lighting props costume sound stage directions. 	<p>Students use the opening stage directions from their set text to draw the set. They can also survey their text for the use of stagecraft and compile lists for scenes, finding associated images to either create a collage/poster or a PowerPoint to highlight multimodal aspects of images and music/sounds (if applicable to play). They can then analyse the stagecraft choices for associations/symbolism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This group work could be divided by scenes or by stagecraft element (eg props). Groups could compile initial 'lists' of stagecraft elements and find images for other groups to explore the possible associated meanings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet resources for images and access to YouTube Poster paper Presentational software

Week 5

Characterisation

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore individual characters and how they are created, including stereotypes and their representations within the play • interpret aspects of stagecraft relevant to characters and characterisation. 	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to the set drama text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • phonetics, phonology and prosodics • lexis and semantics • grammar • discourse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can create character maps to explore aspects of characterisation: appearance; background; speech style (lexical, grammatical, phonological and discourse features); behaviours on stage; aspects of stagecraft relevant (eg stage directions). • Students can create a 'Facebook' profile for characters – likes/dislikes, friends and posts and/or inbox communication with another character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an introduction to the text, students could be given 'snippets' of dialogue for each of the main characters, plus relevant stage directions for each one (appearance behaviours, non-verbal communication etc). • From this students could write their first impressions of the character and share with group to find similarities/differences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A3 posters or presentations • Facebook templates available online

Week 6

Power

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise how power can be presented in language explore the impact of stagecraft on the presentation of power interpret the negotiated and shifting nature of power within a play. 	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to the set drama text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of concepts associated with power (including asymmetry, unequal encounters, aspects of critical discourse analysis and social deixis). ways of presenting power through: dialogue (applying all relevant language levels); stagecraft; structure proxemics and body language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students analyse extracts from the play for powerful and powerless language: eg turn-taking, topic control, mean length utterances, interruptions etc. Students can then find images from the play in performance or watch stills from film versions. They should annotate aspects of stagecraft and non-verbal communication used in the images or stills to illustrate powerful and powerless behaviours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can read relevant chapters about drama in Mick Short (1996), <i>Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose</i>, Longman (for example there is a useful checklist of features in chapter 7 about turn taking). Scenes from different points of the play could be studied to explore shifting power between characters. 	<p>Images from scenes (theatre or film)</p>

Week 7

Pragmatics: speech acts and maxims (also see sample lesson plan)

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify speech acts and their force understand the 'co-operative' principle and conversational maxims and apply to drama interpret meaning through identifying speech acts and conversational maxims chosen by playwrights. 	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to the set drama text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> types of speech acts felicity conditions cooperative principles conversational maxims. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can explore the types of speech acts by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> defining speech acts and types of speech acts and their realisations experimenting with different contexts analysing extracts from play for these speech acts exploring their effects (intended and actual) in the play. They can then survey selected extracts for characters' compliance and breaking of maxims and consider how these link to characterisation, power and conflict. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students could complete additional work exploring either one character in detail or more developed discussion of the relationship between two characters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TV/film clips of play studied Useful modelled examples of speech act analysis for play extracts in Mick Short (1996), Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose, Longman

Week 8

Politeness

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand the key concepts of politeness explore the ways that politeness and impoliteness are represented in drama interpret meaning from the politeness and impoliteness strategies represented. 	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to the set drama text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of concepts associated with politeness, including: positive politeness; negative politeness; types of face-threatening acts (FTAs); impoliteness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students compile a list of linguistic strategies to show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> positive politeness (making hearer feel good) negative politeness (awareness of imposition on hearer) impoliteness. Students explore extracts of dialogue to answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> who uses what politeness strategies? how are they encoded in the language? why do they use these? what effect do these have? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students could undertake some additional research, for example Jonathan Culpeper's work on impoliteness, and explore this in relation to extracts from their set text. Students could map politeness in the play to see if the characters maintain the same strategies, if politeness increases/decreases, and in what specific contexts politeness is used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint or handout outlining: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> definitions for the types of politeness likely linguistic indicators associated with these A number of short extracts from the play being studied TV/film versions of play TV clips to explore FTAs and impoliteness

Week 9

Schemas

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be able to explain schemas analyse different types of conflict (family, marital, friends, society etc) interpret the playwright's choices and representations of schemas. 	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to the set drama text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of schema theory and how schemas are activated in drama through frames (the genre and typical aspects) and scripts (sequentially ordered information).. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students explore their knowledge of 'scripts' eg greeting/welcome or family birthday parties by discussing their personal 'scripts'. Options can include creating a written version and/or devising a role play for the scenarios. Students compare/contrast versions to identify contextual factors and linguistic features. Students compare two sections in play for foregrounded elements or deviations from schemas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students could be given further options in terms of conducting activities (ie paired, group work etc). Options for role play/writing could be set as appropriate for the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transcripts Films/TV shows (as possible stimulus) Extract from <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> Selected extracts from the play being studied

Week 10

Themes and conflict

Learning objectives	Subject-specific skills	Learning activity	Differentiation and extension	Resources
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the key themes of the play• make links between themes and ideas of conflict• explore how themes are presented in language, stagecraft and the use of dramatic conventions.	<p>Applying knowledge of the following to the set drama text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• phonetics, phonology and prosodics• lexis and semantics• grammar• pragmatics• discourse.	<p>Divide the play's key themes between pairs of students and ask them to create a visual display after finding and analysing relevant key quotations. They can then link these to a character or characters, and identify key scenes or extracts that highlight and exemplify aspects of stagecraft.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students could provide their own lists of themes.• Key linguistic terms and aspects of stagecraft (eg props) could be given to students to select from. Group feedback could compare main aspects of stagecraft and linguistic devices used for each theme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A3 paper• List of themes prepared on laminate cards• Glossaries