

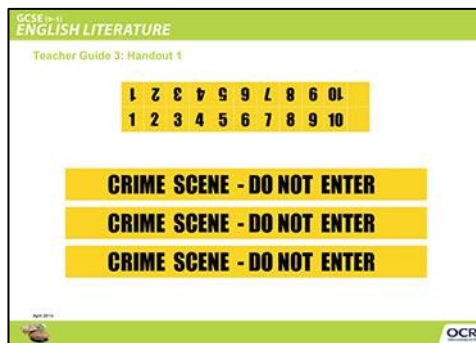
GCSE (9–1) ENGLISH LITERATURE

Teacher Guide 3

Exploring context – Shakespeare

Instructions and answers for teachers

These instructions should accompany the OCR resources 'Teacher Guide 3: Handout 1' and 'Teacher Guide 3: Handout 2', which support OCR GCSE (9–1) English Literature.



Learners reflect critically and evaluatively on their reading, and are expected to respond to some of the following:

- themes, ideas and issues
- atmosphere and emotion
- plot development
- characters and relationships
- language
- dramatic effects
- relevant social, historical or cultural contexts, as demonstrated in the play.

Comprehension skills: learners pay attention to the details of a text: understanding the significance of a word, phrase or sentence in context.

Critical reading skills: learners reflect critically and evaluatively on a text, using an understanding of context to inform reading.

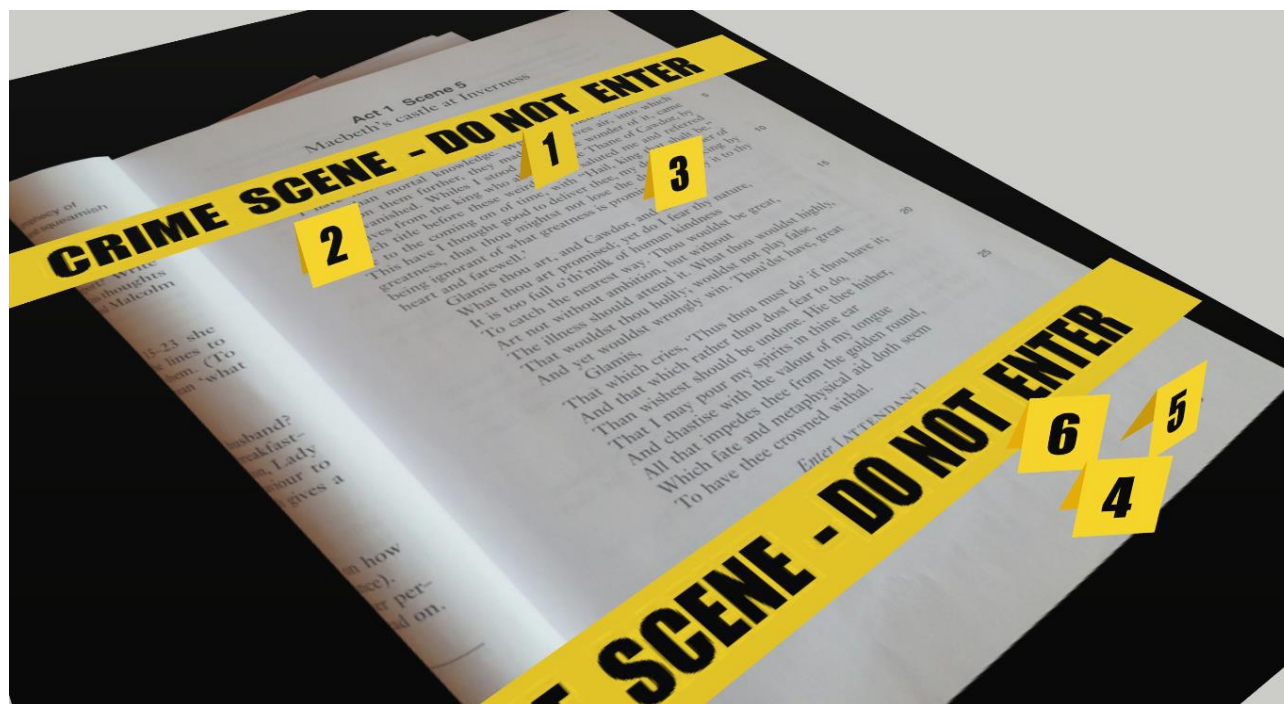
Associated materials:

'Teacher Guide 3: Handout 1' and 'Teacher Guide 3: Handout 2' activity sheets.



GCSE (9–1) ENGLISH LITERATURE

Activity 1



Macbeth: Crime Scene Investigation

Logistics:

- Learners split into two teams – the FBI and the local police – and search for different references to context within the text. They mark these with a yellow ‘crime scene investigation’ evidence card and cordon off that part of the text with ‘CRIME SCENE DO NOT ENTER’ tape (see Teacher Guide 3, Handout 1). Learners then write on the whiteboard/ interactive white board the type of context they’ve identified and its location in the text (e.g. social/historical context. Malcolm in Act 1, Scene 4, line 5: ‘...very frankly he confessed his treasons/Implored your highness’s pardon, and set forth/A deep repentence...’). The other team cannot then claim this part of the text. The winning team is the one with the most context ‘clues’.
- Alternatively, learners work as one team and police-tape off all of Act 1, and the first two scenes of Act 2, or learners could split into nine teams and cordon off a scene each.
- You could also enlarge the text and print on A3 sheets, and then lay it out on the floor. Teacher Guide 3: Handout 1 can also be enlarged so that the crime scene tape and evidence cards can be used with the enlarged text.



GCSE (9-1) ENGLISH LITERATURE

Activity 2

Hand out the blank version of the table below (Teacher Guide 3: Handout 2).

To differentiate, give learners the contexts they are looking for (friendship, loyalty to one's king, marriage):

and/or give them examples from the text of these references to context

and/or give them some of the effects of these contextual references: i.e. to build character, theme, and for dramatic effect.

Cut and paste exemplar answers from the table below into Teacher Guide 3: Handout 2 in order to differentiate material.

Learners then decide how the references to different contexts that they have located in the class for Activity 1 help to build character or theme, or how they are used for dramatic effect, to complete the table.

Learners then feed back to the rest of the class.

Context	Evidence and location (Act, Scene, line)	Evidence card	Character	Theme	Dramatic effect
Social/historical context: the divine right of kings, loyalty to the king	1:4:5 Malcolm on the Thane of Cawdor: 'very frankly he confessed his treasons/ Implored your highness's pardon...'				Shakespeare emphasises what the correct course should be, making Macbeth's later actions seem all the more remorseless and amoral.
	1:4:14 Duncan on the Thane of Cawdor: 'He was a gentleman on whom I built/ An absolute trust.'			The context is being used to bring out the theme of appearances being deceptive.	
	1:7:13 Macbeth on Duncan: 'He's here in double trust: First, as I am his kinsman and his subject, Strong both against the deed...'			The context is used to bolster the theme of going against nature.	
	2:1:28 Banquo: '...My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,'				Banquo's loyalty to the king is unquestioning. He is a foil to Macbeth's villainy.



Context	Evidence and location (Act, Scene, line)	Evidence card	Character	Theme	Dramatic effect
Social/historical context: the divine right of kings, loyalty to the king	1:6:15 Lady Macbeth to Duncan: 'All our service, In every point twice done and then double.'			The context is used to bolster the theme of appearances being deceptive.	Context used for dramatic irony. The audience, unlike Duncan, knows Lady Macbeth's true intentions.
Social context: friendship	1:3:152 Macbeth to Banquo: 'Think upon what hath chanced and at more time,/ The interim having weighed it, let us speak/ Our free hearts each to other.'		Trust between Macbeth and Banquo is used to highlight how Macbeth may not have acted without the prompting of Lady Macbeth.		
	1:3:125 Banquo to Macbeth: 'But 'tis strange,/ And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,/ The instruments of darkness tell us truths;/ Win us with honest trifles, to betray's/ In deepest confidence.'		Banquo has Macbeth's best interests at heart. He acts in the context of a friendship.	Bolsters the theme of appearances being deceptive	Shakespeare uses the context to create suspense, foreshadows the drama that will shortly unfold, and helps the audience draw a moral message from the story
Social context: marriage	1:5:10 Macbeth tells his wife (in a letter) that the witches saluted him with "Hail, king that shalt be". He goes on to say 'This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness,'		He confides in his wife. He wants her to share in his good fortune. What is his hers. He acts within the context of a marriage. Does he do this because he wants her to spur him on? Does he know he is weak without her? His behaviour within this context adds ambiguity and complexity to his character.		



GCSE (9-1) ENGLISH LITERATURE

Context	Evidence and location (Act, Scene, line)	Evidence card	Character	Theme	Dramatic effect
Social context: marriage	2:2:21 Lady Macbeth to her husband: 'A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.'		Lady Macbeth takes liberties with her husband that Banquo, a friend and fellow soldier, would not. It is an authentic husband and wife relationship. The context is used to show that Lady Macbeth's character has not yet appreciated the magnitude of their actions.		Dramatic irony is created because it is Lady Macbeth who will be more haunted by the sight of what they have done.
BONUS POINT: Social context: parent-child relationship	2:2:12 Lady Macbeth on Duncan: 'Had he not resembled/ My father as he slept, I had done't.'		She reveals her humanity through reference to this father daughter relationship. It is the first crack to appear.	Going against nature is impossible without consequences.	Dramatic foreshadowing. Her humanity will be her undoing.
Historical context: Banquo as an ancestor of James I	Duncan: 'Noble Banquo,/ That hast no less deserved, nor must be known/ No less to have done so,'				Banquo's bravery is flagged up. This was important as it would please James I, a powerful patron of Shakespeare's but it also helps establish Banquo as a foil to Macbeth. Banquo reminds us of the natural course that Macbeth defies.



GCSE (9–1) **ENGLISH LITERATURE**



We'd like to know your view on the resources we produce. By clicking on the 'Like' or 'Dislike' button you can help us to ensure that our resources work for you. When the email template pops up please add additional comments if you wish and then just click 'Send'. Thank you.

OCR Resources: *the small print*

OCR's resources are provided to support the teaching of OCR specifications, but in no way constitute an endorsed teaching method that is required by the Board, and the decision to use them lies with the individual teacher. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the content, OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions within these resources. We update our resources on a regular basis, so please check the OCR website to ensure you have the most up to date version.

© OCR 2015 - This resource may be freely copied and distributed, as long as the OCR logo and this message remain intact and OCR is acknowledged as the originator of this work.

OCR acknowledges the use of the following content: Maths and English icons: Air0ne/Shutterstock.com

April 2015

