



Pearson
Edexcel

A level English Literature

Component 1: Drama

Support for the
teaching of the drama
texts





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Introduction

This resource has been created to support teachers in teaching their two chosen Component 1 drama texts.

Each text has a section with links and ideas for resources to help with different approaches and ideas around teaching the text. The links include a variety of formats such as articles, podcasts and Interviews with writers.

There are many other resources available on the [subject webpage](#).

The two new texts (*Les Blancs* and *Sweat*) added for first teaching from September 2022 have their own separate guides.

Shakespeare: Tragedy

Anthony and Cleopatra

General background and introduction

- [Podcasts about Shakespeare's life](#) – this series of podcasts from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust asked 60 experts to talk for 1 minute on a key element of Shakespeare. These introductory podcasts range from looking at Shakespeare's life, his influences and the question over authorship.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be used at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website which starts to introduce some literary criticism.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.
- A [lecture from Harvard University](#) on Antony and Cleopatra and the themes. This is a long YouTube video, and it's best to start it at the 4:10 minute mark.

How meanings are shaped


- [Shakespearean language](#) – an article by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, the editors of the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare Editions.
- [Ominous Oboes](#) – a blog post from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust looking at the use of music and song in Shakespeare's plays using Act IV, Scene iii of *Antony and Cleopatra*.
- [Symbols](#) and [motifs](#) – are discussed in Course Hero. These are interesting starters to discussing Shakespeare's use of symbol, imagery and motif throughout the play.
- [Shakespeare study guide](#) – this guide discusses Shakespeare's use of language.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – an overview of the contexts of *Antony and Cleopatra* from the RSC website.
- [Rome](#) – an article from the British Library discusses Shakespeare's use of Roman history in *Antony and Cleopatra*.
- [Multiculturalism](#) – an article from the British Library discussing multiculturalism in Shakespeare's play, including *Antony and Cleopatra*.
- [Plutarch's Life of Antony](#) – this article from the Folger Shakespeare Library discusses how Cleopatra was portrayed by Plutarch and subsequently by Shakespeare.

Other interpretations

- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the Literariness website.
- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the British Library website.
- [A modern perspective](#) – an article by Cynthia Marshall on the Folger Shakespeare Library.

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- [Cleopatra](#) – an article about the representation of Cleopatra by the historian Lucy Hughes-Hallett.

Productions and notes from directors/performers

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Past productions from the RSC](#)
- [Production from the National Theatre](#)
- [Interview with Simon Goodwin](#) – the director of the RSC production talks about the play.

Shakespeare: Tragedy

Hamlet

General background and introduction

- [Podcasts about Shakespeare's life](#) – this series of podcasts from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust asked 60 experts to talk for 1 minute on a key element of Shakespeare. These introductory podcasts range from looking at Shakespeare's life, his influences and the question over authorship.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero.
- This is a basic overview which could be used at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website which starts to introduce some literary criticism.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.

How meanings are shaped

- [Shakespearean language](#) – an article by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, the editors of the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare Editions.
- [Learning Zone: Hamlet](#) – the RSC website provides lesson ideas and analysis of language, character and setting/staging.
- [TedEd](#) – this short animated video from the TedEd series discusses the power of language in *Hamlet*.
- [The Mousetrap](#) – This article from the British Library website discusses Shakespeare's use of a 'play within a play'.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – An overview of the contexts of *Hamlet* from the RSC website.
- [History and sources](#) – this webpage from the British Library collates interesting contextual sources for *Hamlet* together.
- [Elizabethan History](#) – this webpage from the Open University outlines the different contextual factors which may have influenced Shakespeare.

Other interpretations

- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the Literariness website.
- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the British Library website
- [A modern perspective](#) – an article by Michael Neill on the Folger Shakespeare Library website.
- [Hamlet articles](#) – the British Library website provides a number of interesting articles from Elaine Showalter, John Mullan and other leading academics around the key themes and issues discussed in *Hamlet*.



Productions and notes from directors/performers

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Past productions from the RSC](#) - this webpage from the RSC website discusses previous productions and links to further information about each production.
- [Production from the National Theatre](#) – this is a YouTube interview with Benedict Cumberbatch from the 2015 production. This production is also available on Amazon Prime video.
- [Almeida Theatre 2017](#) – the Almeida Theatre website has a number of interviews with the cast and the director of the critically acclaimed production with Andrew Scott as *Hamlet*.
- [Interview with Kenneth Branagh](#)– the director and star of the 1996 film version of *Hamlet* talks about the play.



Shakespeare: Tragedy

King Lear

General background and introduction

- [Podcasts about Shakespeare's life](#) – this series of podcasts from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust asked 60 experts to talk for 1 minute on a key element of Shakespeare. These introductory podcasts range from looking at Shakespeare's life, his influences and the question over authorship.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero.
- This is a basic overview which could be use at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website which starts to introduce some literary criticism.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.

How meanings are shaped

- [Shakespearean language](#) – an article by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, the editors of the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare Editions.
- [Learning Zone: King Lear](#) – the RSC website provides lesson ideas and analysis of language, character and setting/staging.
- [Harvard Lecture: King Lear](#) – this long YouTube video of a lecture about *King Lear* contains a lot of discussion of how Shakespeare shaped meaning in the play. Start from the 17 minute mark.
- [Character Analysis](#) – this article from the British Library website discusses how Shakespeare created villains in his play.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – an overview of the contexts of *King Lear* from the RSC website.
- [History and sources](#) – this webpage from the British Library collates interesting contextual sources for *King Lear* together.
- [Contexts and history](#) – this webpage from Colombia University outlines the different contextual factors which may have influenced Shakespeare.

Other interpretations

- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the Literariness website.
- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the British Library website.
- [A modern perspective](#) – an article by Susan Synder on the Folger Shakespeare Library website.



- [King Lear Articles](#) – the British Library website provides a number of interesting articles from Kim Ballard, Gillian Woods and other leading academics around the key themes and issues discussed in *King Lear*.

Productions and notes from directors/performers

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Past productions from the RSC](#) - this webpage from the RSC website discusses previous productions and links to further information about each production.
- [Production from the National Theatre](#) – this is a YouTube clip from the 2014 production with Simon Russell-Beale as King Lear and directed by Sam Mendes.
- [Sir Ian McKellan Interview](#) – in this video from ‘Staging Shakespeare’, Sir Ian McKellan talks about performing the role of King Lear.
- [Interview with Sam Mendes](#) – the director of the 2014 National Theatre production discussing the play.

Shakespeare: Tragedy

Othello

General background and introduction

- [Podcasts about Shakespeare's life](#) – these series of podcasts from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust asked 60 experts to talk for 1 minute on a key element of Shakespeare. These introductory podcasts range look at Shakespeare's life, his influences and the question over authorship.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be use at the start of the course to introduce themes and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website with teaching resources and activities.
- A [lecture from Harvard University](#) on *Othello* and the themes. This is a long YouTube video, and it is best to start it at the 2:30 minute mark.

How meanings are shaped


- [Shakespearean language](#) – an article by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, the editors of the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare Editions.
- [Shakespearean Language](#) – a short video from The Folger Shakespeare Library about Shakespearean language with clips from a recent production.
- [Learning resources on language, form, motifs and imagery](#)
- [Learning resources on character and language](#)
- [Learning resources on setting](#) – these teaching materials from the Royal Shakespeare Company include short videos and ideas for lessons and activities.

Contexts

- [Race and Misogyny](#) – this article from the many resources about *Othello* on the British Library website explores the contexts in which *Othello* was written.
- [Shakespeare in context](#) – this PDF, also from the British Library, summarises the different sources and contexts relating to the history of the play.
- [Multiculturalism](#) – an article from the British Library discussing multiculturalism in Shakespeare's plays, including *Othello*.
- [Context of Shakespeare in different productions](#) – this short video from the National Theatre looks at four of their productions and the contexts they represent.

Other interpretations

- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the Literariness website.
- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the British Library website.

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- [Critical Approaches Othello](#) – a teacher pack with a PDF download to useful resources including other interpretations.
 - [Is Othello a racist play?](#) – a long discussion held at the Swan Theatre with academics and performers. This is the audio of the full lecture with still images.
 - [Toni Morrison talks about Othello](#) – Recorded at the Hay Festival, Toni Morrison talks about her reading of *Othello*.

Productions and notes from directors/performers

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Production from the RSC](#)
- [Production from the National Theatre](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Highlights from a production](#) – this short video focusses on deception and how it was portrayed in a production at the Folger Shakespeare Library.



Shakespeare: Comedy

A Midsummer Night's Dream

General background and introduction

- [Podcasts about Shakespeare's life](#) – this series of podcasts from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust asked 60 experts to talk for 1 minute on a key element of Shakespeare. These introductory podcasts range from looking at Shakespeare's life, his influences and the question over authorship.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be used at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website which starts to introduce some literary criticism.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.

How meanings are shaped

- [Shakespearean language](#) – an article by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, the editors of the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare Editions.
- [Learning Zone: Midsummer Night's Dream](#) – the RSC website provides lesson ideas and analysis of language, character and setting/staging.
- [BBC Teach](#) – the actress Pippa Nixon discusses Shakespeare's use of imagery in Titania's speech to Oberon.
- [Shakespeare's use of language](#) – these lessons from The Globe Theatre introduce and build on the ideas in Shakespeare's play.
- [Music and setting](#) – This article from the British Library website discusses how Shakespeare uses music and setting to create meaning.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – an overview of the contexts of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from the RSC website.
- [History and sources](#) – this webpage from the British Library collates interesting contextual sources for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* together.
- [Social Context](#) – these resources from the Globe Theatre discuss the social and historical contexts linked to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Other interpretations

- [Comedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the British Library website.
- [A modern perspective](#) – an article by Catherine Belsey on the Folger Shakespeare Library website.



- [A Midsummer Night's Dream Articles](#) – the British Library website provides a number of interesting articles from Kim Ballard, Gillian Woods and other leading academics around the key themes and issues discussed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Productions and notes from directors/performers

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Past productions from the RSC](#) – this webpage from the RSC website discusses previous productions and links to further information about each production.
- [Production from the National Theatre](#) – there are a series of clips from the 2019 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* directed by Nicholas Hytner.
- [Behind Closed Doors](#) – in this video, the cast of the 2021 Globe production discuss how to perform key scenes of the play.
- [BAFTA Interview](#) – in this video from BAFTA, Russell T. Davies discusses directing his film version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.



Shakespeare: Comedy

Measure for Measure

General background and introduction

- [Podcasts about Shakespeare's life](#) – this series of podcasts from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust asked 60 experts to talk for 1 minute on a key element of Shakespeare. These introductory podcasts range from looking at Shakespeare's life, his influences and the question over authorship.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero.
- This is a basic overview which could be use at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website which starts to introduce some literary criticism.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.

How meanings are shaped

- [Shakespearean language](#) – an article by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, the editors of the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare Editions.
- [Learning Zone: Measure for Measure](#) – the RSC website provides lesson ideas and analysis of language, character and setting/staging.
- [Harvard University Lecture](#) – this long video is a lecture from Harvard University about the play and how Shakespeare shapes meaning in the play. It is best to start it at around the 4 minute mark.
- [Shakespeare Study Guide](#) – this guide provides an overview of the play as well as discussing the ways meanings are shaped.
- [Character analysis](#) – this article from the British Library website discusses how Shakespeare uses his characters to shape meaning.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – an overview of the sources used by Shakespeare on the RSC website.
- [The problem play](#) – this webpage from the British Library collates the contextual sources and discusses the key contexts around *Measure for Measure* and why it might be a 'problem' play.
- [Historical Context](#) – this webpage from the Folger Shakespeare library discusses the historical contexts within the play.

Other interpretations

- [Comedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the British Library website.
- [A modern perspective](#) – an article by Chrisy Desmet on the Folger Shakespeare Library website.



- [Measure for Measure Articles](#) – the British Library website provides a number of interesting articles from John Mullan, Kathleen E McCluskie and other leading academics around the key themes and issues discussed in *Measure for Measure*.

Productions and notes from directors/performers

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Past productions from the RSC](#) – this webpage from the RSC website discusses previous productions and links to further information about each production.
- [Texas Shakespeare Festival](#) – a full production of the play from the 2012 Texas Shakespeare Festival.
- [Theatre for a new audience production](#) – in this video, the cast of the 2017 TFANA production of *Measure for Measure* discuss the themes within the play.
- [Cheek By Jowl resources](#) – these lessons and videos discuss Cheek By Jowl's Russian language (with English Subtitles) production of *Measure for Measure*. NB: to access this pack which includes language, context and essays, you need to provide your email and receive and access code.



Shakespeare: Comedy

The Taming of the Shrew

General background and introduction

- [Podcasts about Shakespeare's life](#) – this series of podcasts from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust asked 60 experts to talk for 1 minute on a key element of Shakespeare. These introductory podcasts range from looking at Shakespeare's life, his influences and the question over authorship.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be use at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website which starts to introduce some literary criticism.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.

How meanings are shaped

- [Shakespearean language](#) – an article by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, the editors of the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare Editions.
- [Learning Zone: The Taming of the Shrew](#) – the RSC website provides lesson ideas and analysis of language, character and setting/staging.
- [Bard Explored](#) – in this lecture, Dr Paul Budra discusses how Shakespeare shaped meaning in his play.
- [Literary Devices](#) – this brief overview of the play also includes the different devices used by Shakespeare and the effects they have. There is not much detail but a good starting point.
- [Clothing](#) – this article from the British Library website discusses how Shakespeare's use of costume and transformation.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – an overview of the sources used by Shakespeare on the RSC website.
- [Comic conventions](#) – this webpage from the British Library collates looks at the conventions of comedy and how *The Taming of the Shrew* both follows and circumvents them.
- [Gender politics](#) – this review and interview in *The Guardian* discusses two recent productions of the play that investigate the role of gender in the play.

Other interpretations

- [Comedy](#) – an overview of comedy from the British Library website.
- [A modern perspective](#) – an article by Karen Newman on the Folger Shakespeare Library website.



Shakespeare: Comedy

Twelfth Night

General background and introduction

- [Podcasts about Shakespeare's life](#) – this series of podcasts from The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust asked 60 experts to talk for 1 minute on a key element of Shakespeare. These introductory podcasts range from looking at Shakespeare's life, his influences and the question over authorship.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero.
- This is a basic overview which could be use at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website which starts to introduce some literary criticism.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.

How meanings are shaped

- [Shakespearean language](#) – an article by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine, the editors of the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare Editions.
- [Learning Zone: Twelfth Night](#) – the RSC website provides lesson ideas and analysis of language, character and setting/staging.
- [Key Scenes - The Globe](#) – in this interactive learning tool from The Globe, the use of language and its effectiveness is discussed using key scenes from the 2016 production.
- [Communication](#) – in this video from the National theatre, the director of the 2016 production discusses the importance of language in shaping meaning and communicating the play's themes. There is another on the same site discussing the use of [love language](#).
- [Festive word play and riddles](#) – this article from the British Library website discusses how Shakespeare's use of setting, comedy, festivity and word play all help to shape the overall meaning of the play.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – an overview of the date of the play and the time it was written in.
- [Marriage and courtship](#) – this webpage from the British Library collates looks at the depiction of marriage and courtship in Shakespeare plays, including *Twelfth Night*.
- [Contexts](#) – this collection of documents from the British Library provides lots of information about the different contexts which inform the text. There is also a [teaching pack](#) about how Shakespeare creates comedy by subverting early modern ideas about gender.



Other interpretations

- [Comedy](#) – an overview of comedy from the British Library website.
- [A modern perspective](#) – an article by Catherine Belsey on the Folger Shakespeare Library website.
- [Twelfth Night Articles](#) – the British Library website provides a number of interesting articles from Michael Dobson, Francois Laroque and other leading academics around the key themes and issues discussed in *Twelfth Night*.

Productions and notes from directors/performers

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Past productions from the RSC](#) – this webpage from the RSC website discusses previous productions and links to further information about each production.
- [National Theatre page](#) – the National Theatre production from 2017 contain interviews, articles and images from the play.
- [Twelfth Night at the NT](#) – this selection of videos from the 2017 production discusses a number of elements of the play such as language, gender, mistaken identity and disguises. Some of the videos have also been referenced in the links above and may be useful when discussing how meanings are shaped.

Pre-1900

Doctor Faustus

General background and introduction

- [Life and times of Christopher Marlowe](#) – this page, on the Marlowe Society website, provides a useful overview of Marlowe’s life. There are also links on the site to further reading.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be used at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- An [overview of the play](#) from the literariness website which starts to introduce some literary criticism.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.
- [Christopher Marlowe](#) – a website with details about Marlowe’s life, essays about his work and other useful sources.

How meanings are shaped

- [Open University resources](#) – these resources on the Open University website discuss Marlowe’s use of language and discuss the play’s main themes.
- [RSC Teacher pack](#) - the RSC website provides lesson ideas and analysis of language, character and setting/staging.
- [Royal Holloway resources](#) – this teacher pack and video look at the main themes of Marlowe’s work and discuss key passages.
- [Penguin teacher guide](#) – this signet guide discusses the play, and the ways meaning are shaped.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – an overview of the play and how it is linked to the Faust story.
- [Religion and magic](#) – this article by Liza Picard from the British Library web investigates how Elizabethans viewed the idea of magic and religion.
- [Contexts](#) – this collection of documents from the British Library provides lots of information about the different contexts which inform the text.
- [Elizabethan religion and revisions of the play](#) – this series of podcasts, delivered by Emma Smith from Oxford University, discusses a number of plays written at the time of Shakespeare. Marlowe’s play is no. 6 in the series.
- [Tragedy](#) – an overview of tragedy from the Literariness website.



Productions and other useful links

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [Interview with RSC Actors](#) – this video is an interview with actors from the 2016 production of the play at the RSC.
- [Doctor Faustus Act 5 scenes 2-3](#) – this video, with a short commentary, is taken from the performance at The Globe.
- [BBC Radio Drama](#) – this radio drama, produced in 1995, is a traditional reading of the play.



Pre-1900

The Duchess of Malfi

General background and introduction

- [Life and times of John Webster](#) – this page, from BBC arts, gives an outline of John Webster and his work as well as useful links to further information about the *Duchess of Malfi*.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be use at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- [The Duchess of Malfi in 60 seconds](#) – the cast from the production at The Almeida theatre sum up the play in 60 seconds.
- An [overview of the plot](#) from the RSC website.

How meanings are shaped

- [BBC Arts resources](#) – these resources from the BBC are linked to the Globe Production ‘by candlelight’. This article discusses Webster’s use of light and dark imagery.
- [Open University resources](#) – these resources on the OU website talk about the play as a whole but also focuses on how meanings are shaped by Webster as well as suggesting further reading.
- [Open University Podcasts](#) – this series of podcasts discusses Webster’s text and how the play could be staged and presented to an audience.
- [Almeida Theatre resources](#) – although these are more focussed on A level Drama, there are some resources that examine how meanings are shaped – particularly the section on ‘directorial challenges’ which discusses the death of the Duchess.
- [Negative emotions in Webster’s plays](#) – this article from the University of Lancaster conducts a statistical analysis of the emotions portrayed in Webster’s plays against Shakespeare’s tragedies. An interesting angle to take and there are some insights into Webster’s writing style.

Contexts

- [Dates, Sources and History](#) – an overview of the play and information about the real [Duchess of Malfi](#).
- [Gender and class](#) – this series of podcasts, delivered by Emma Smith from Oxford University, discusses a number of plays written at the time of Shakespeare. Webster’s play is no. 17 in the series.
- [Contexts](#) – this collection of documents from the British Library provides lots of information about the different contexts which inform the text.
- [Jacobean Revenge Tragedy](#) – a simple overview of the genre from the Encyclopaedia Britannica which has links to other sources and further reading.



Productions and other useful links

- [Production from the Globe](#) – NB: there is a charge to rent this from the site.
- [The Duchess Speaks](#) – three interviews with Joan Lyiola, who played the Duchess in the RSC production. In these interviews, she discusses the character of the Duchess and her relationships in the play.
- [BBC Arts page](#) – this page contains videos of the key scenes from the production at the Globe as well as interviews with Gemma Arterton who played the Duchess.
- [BBC Radio Drama](#) – this radio drama, produced in 1995, is a traditional reading of the play.



Pre-1900

The Importance of Being Earnest

General background and introduction

- [Life of Oscar Wilde](#) – a brief overview of the playwright's life.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be used at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- [Victoria and Albert Museum](#) – this short guide from the Victoria and Albert Museum outlines the plot of the play as well as providing some information about Oscar Wilde and the history of the play.
- [Oscar Wilde podcast](#) – a series of podcasts from the University of Oxford giving an overview of Oscar Wilde's life and his works.

How meanings are shaped

- [Poetry Foundation](#) – a useful overview of Wilde's life and works.
- with some analysis of the way he shapes meaning in *The Importance of Being Earnest*.
- [Literary analysis of The Importance of Being Earnest](#) – this overview of the play also looks into Wilde's use of language and how he shapes meaning.
- [Characterisation](#) – this article from Thoughtco.com looks at how Wilde shapes meaning through his male characters. There is also an article on the same website about [female characters](#).
- [Penguin guide](#) – this PDF on the penguin website is a teacher guide including plot, characters and language.

Contexts

- [Satire and Comedy](#) – in the article from the British Library website, Professor John Stokes discusses Wilde's comedy and how it was viewed by Victorian audiences.
- [Aestheticism and Decadence](#) – in this article, also from the British Library website, Dr Carole Burdett discusses Victorian Aestheticism and Decadence and references Oscar Wilde.
- [Wilde's own life](#) – in this short PDF guide, the Museum of London provides information about Wilde's play and how his personal life influenced the plot and the themes.
- [Gender roles in the 19th century](#) – this article from the British Library website outlines the roles of men and women in Victorian society.

Productions and other useful links

- [History of theatre productions](#) – this webpage from the V&A website provides a brief history of the theatre productions of the play.



- [Vaudeville Theatre](#) – this webpage from The Vaudeville Theatre provides some history of the play and their productions as well as some videos.
- [Review of the play](#) – this review from 1895 was written at the time the play was first performed.
- [2002 film production](#) – this film clip features interviews with the cast and director of the 2002 film production of the play starring Judi Dench as Lady Bracknell.



Pre-1900

The Rover

General background and introduction

- [Overview of The Rover](#) – this brief summary provides an overview of the plot as well as an overview of [Behn's life](#).
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be used at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- [Overview of Aphra Behn's Life](#) – this article from the Literary Hub looks at Behn's life and work.
- [Overview of Aphra Behn's life and works](#) – this article reviews Behn's life, work and influences.
- **How meanings are shaped**
- [Characterisation](#) – this teaching pack from the British Library looks at how Behn used character types and tropes associated with carnival to create meanings in her play.
- [Literary analysis](#) – this overview of the play also looks into Behn's use of language and how she shapes meaning.
- [Disguise](#) - in this video, Professor Judith Hawley discusses Behn's use of disguise and female characters in *The Rover*.
- [A bit Lit](#) – a discussion about *The Rover* with academics working on the Behn project.

Contexts

- [Historical and social contexts](#) – in this article on the British Library website, Elaine Hobby discusses *The Rover* and its contexts.
- [Restoration comedy](#) – in this article, also from the British Library website, Diane Maybank discusses Restoration comedy and its main genre features.
- [BBC podcasts](#) – Melvyn Bragg discusses Aphra Behn and the time she was writing in.
- [Reading the Past](#) – this video discusses Aphra Behn. Towards the end of the video, the presenter discusses how Behn's legacy and how she was viewed by other writers.

Productions and other useful links

- [RSC Production](#) – the RSC website provides details about the play as well as videos and pictures from the play.
- [Janet Todd](#) – the academic and author discusses her book about Behn in this article on the Historia website.



Post-1900

A Streetcar Named Desire

General background and introduction

- [Life of Tennessee Williams](#) – a brief overview of the playwright’s life.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be used at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- [Penguin guide](#) – this short ‘signet’ guide gives an overview of the play as well as information about Williams.
- [Kindness of Strangers](#) – a series of student friendly podcasts. Each episode explores a key theme, character or context.

How meanings are shaped

- [Poetry Foundation](#) – a useful overview of Williams’ life and works –with some analysis of the way he shapes meaning in *Streetcar*.
- [Literary analysis of Streetcar](#) – this overview of the play also looks into Williams’ use of language and how he shapes meaning.
- [Characterisation](#) – this sample from the Hodder Education guide provides some insight into the themes of the play and Williams’ use of character.
- [Setting](#) – this article from the Thoughtco.com website investigates the use of setting and how the characters react to their surroundings. This website also talks about the themes and [symbols](#) within the play.
- [University of Kent](#) – in this short talk for A level students, Dr Will Norman discusses *Streetcar*.

Contexts

- [Morgan Library exhibition](#) – the website for this exhibition on Tennessee Williams and his work contains a lot of interesting contextual details about Williams and his work.
- [Origins of the play](#) – this is a podcast from NPR discussing the background to Williams’ play.
- [Women and gender](#) – this is a podcast from Women’s Hour in 2006 discussing Williams’ portrayal of women in his plays.
- [Review of the play \(1947\)](#) – this review from the New Yorker shows the reception to the play at the time it was performed. NB: access to this article may require a one-off sign in.

Productions and other useful links

- [Young Vic Production](#) – a selection of videos and interviews from the Young Vic production of the play from 2020.



- [The Rapture Theatre Production](#) – this webpage from The Rapture Theatre, a Scottish touring company, also includes some interesting articles about language and production as well as interviews, photos and videos about the production.
- [Review of the film version of the play](#) – the film of the play, released in 1951 was directed by Elia Kazan and starring Marlon Brando as Stanley was a huge success and won many awards. This review, from the New York State film writer's association, looks at the film in relation to the play.



Post-1900

Waiting for Godot

General background and introduction

- [Overview of Waiting for Godot](#) – this brief summary provides an overview of the plot as well as some analysis of the play.
- An [overview of the play](#) and the main themes from Course Hero. This is a basic overview which could be used at the start of the course to introduce themes, context and characters before looking at the play in more depth.
- [Overview of Samuel Beckett's Life and works](#) – this article from the Poetry Foundation discusses Beckett's work with some discussion of *Waiting for Godot*.
- [Overview of Samuel Beckett's life and works](#) – this article from the British Library website is an overview of Samuel Beckett's life and work. There are also links to other articles on the website.

How meanings are shaped

- [Dramatic Structure](#) – in this article, from the British Library website, Chris Power discusses Beckett's play and how he shapes meaning.
- [Literary analysis](#) – this overview of the play also looks into Beckett's imagery and how he shapes meaning.
- [Why should we read Waiting for Godot](#) – these lessons, produced by TedEd include a short animated video, some quizzes and opportunity to open the discussion about the work and its themes.
- [Plot \(or lack of it\)](#) – this podcast on the BBC world service discusses how *Waiting for Godot* uses plot to convey meaning.
- [Theatre and language](#) – this video of a talk from the University of Oxford discusses how Beckett shapes meaning in his play.

Contexts

- [Historical and social contexts](#) – the Wikipedia page for the play is very detailed and provides a good starting point for further reading about the historical and social contexts of the play.
- [Contexts](#) – this YouTube presentation, presented by an educational company based in Australia, talks about the contexts in *Waiting for Godot*.
- [Theatre of the Absurd](#) – this article on the British Library website discusses the Theatre of the Absurd.
- [Tragi-comedy](#) – this article discusses *Waiting for Godot* as a tragi-comedy.



Productions and other useful links

- [Beckett Directs Beckett](#) – this production, from 1953, was directed by Samuel Beckett.
- [Abbey](#) – the Abbey theatre production of the play with some pictures and a video of the production
- [Beckett's Global Journey](#) – this interesting article on the British Library website discusses the different productions of the play around the world.