

The Humpty



Files

A Scheme of Work
Exploring Genres and Playwrights

by

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SAMPLE

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The scripts do not have page numbers so that they can be introduced to students in any order and will not confuse students when they are filed in the order distributed.

Acknowledgement

I have tried to create mini-plays which I believe the authors or the historical period may have produced - if they had been bothered to.

That they are vastly inferior to what might have been I have no doubt, but I have written them with admiration and respect, not mockery or superiority.

Most of the authors are dead, and the living ones have no idea that this project exists. Except for Mark Wheeler, who, when informed out of courtesy that he would be featured, said it was a compliment. He hadn't read it at that point.

If I have not done justice to any of the originals, that is my fault, not theirs.

I hope that these plays inspire you and your students to produce great Drama.

Clive Hulme

SAMPLE

Introduction

These scripts are intended for use by students of Drama so that they may understand that **Form and Style** is as important as Content.

There are 20 Dramatic Genres which span pre-history to Mark Wheeler, from Miracle Plays to Claire Dowie.

Each 2-page script tells the story of Humpty Dumpty in the genre selected, with appropriate language and with appropriate reference to the historical context. You may have chosen different authors and genres to include; have a go!

How you use these with your groups depends very much on the course you are following. They could easily form the basis of a BTEC Unit and be studied in one term. For GCSE groups they could be used gradually throughout a two- or three-year course.

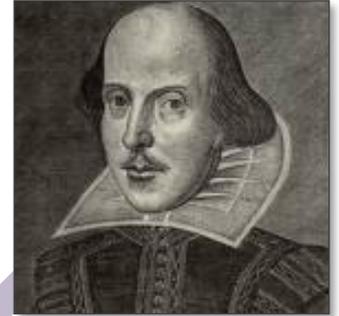
Whichever your preferred method of introducing these texts, I recommend that you give students a copy of the **worksheets** electronically, so that they can complete an ongoing response and research project.

The Support Notes are intended for **teacher use** so that you have the confidence to present these materials with background information to hand. You may disagree with some of the assertions in them. There are some references in the scripts which we hope you will enjoy even if your students don't quite "get" them.

Humpty Dumpty in the style of – William Shakespeare

Characters:

Guard 1
Guard2
The Duke of York
King
Soldier



Scene: The Castle battlements

GUARD 1 Halt! Who goes there?

GUARD 2 I.

GUARD 1 You?

GUARD 2 'Tis I.

GUARD 1 Well met.

GUARD 2 'Tis right to say well met, for met is what we are.
And were we not met here, then elsewhere would we be.

GUARD 1 We'll keep well met right here, upon this stone-clad keep.
And watch the silver'd moon traverse the sky till dawn.

GUARD 2 Watch we shall, for we will have no sleep this argent night.

GUARD 1 No sleep?

GUARD 2 None.

GUARD 1 How so? For if we have no sleep
Then you will be alone upon this watch.

GUARD 2 Alone? How so?

GUARD 1 You should be eye-less.
And, without I, you stand alone on watch.

GUARD 2 The Duke! He walks! See how he broods and mouths
That just the air is audience to his thoughts.

GUARD 1 We should stand back lest he mistake us.

DUKE *(enters reading from a letter)*
OF "And yet, you say, your love for me is constant.
YOLK How, 'constant'? How can love, if love this be,
Absent itself so conspicuously from my chamber
Each time the ebbing sun itself lies down upon its bed?".
Aye, lady, thou has questioned a-right my absence from your chamber.
Yet can I not reveal the cause of my nocturnal flights.
Since those weird hags placed on me their dire curse
Which sits uneasy yet upon my pate,
No mortal being has seen my flesh without its outward vestments
Lest they remark the alabaster-white perfection
In which I am for all eternity encased.
Dear lady, I cannot lay between those sheets
With colour of the selfsame hue as my skin.
But hush! Who goes?

GUARD 1 It is I, your Grace.

GUARD 2 And I, too, sir, am here.

D.O.Y. And you have heard my words, my thoughts, my fears?

GUARD 1 Your Grace, we have.

GUARD 2 We have, your Grace.

D.O.Y. Then I must die! The revelation of my true apparel
Betokens ignominy and shame to all concerned.
Tell my lady that, of all, she was my Eve, but this eve
She will be alone – tonight and all the nights to come.
(He throws himself over the battlements)

GUARD 2 Hie you hence and summon the King and his company.

GUARD 1 There is no need – he comes apace on horse.

KING Good fellows, what news?

GUARD 2 It is the Duke, sire. He has fell to earth.

KING Assist him, all! Bandage up those milk-white limbs
And make him whole anew. What sayest thou?

SOLDIER In sorrow, sir, I say that the fair Duke's breath
Has ceased and he lies, sans life, in pieces on the earth.

KING Then take his mortal shell and bury it with highest praise,
And fullest pomp and circumstance accord this noble man.
For none have given me more service than this soul
And I had hoped to see him as my son.
Summon hence my daughter, let her know that he is gone
There is nothing you or I or they can do
For he has shown us all the tenet to hold dear
Above all: to thine own shell be true

Exeunt

Coming soon – Omelette, Price of Denmark

Humpty Dumpty in the style of – Melodrama (excerpt)

Characters:

Humpty Dumpty – The Hero
Gladys – Humpty's fiancée
Sir Jasper – The Evil Landlord
Grimes – Sir Jasper's Cockney Sidekick



Scene 3 - The edge of a cliff

Sir Jasper So, Humpty, do you *still* refuse to forsake the hand of this woman?

Humpty Dumpty I will **never** forsake Gladys. She is my love, she is my life.

Gladys Oh Humpty! Please be careful what you say. Sir Jasper is evil and he may...

Grimes (*interrupting...*) Shut your marf. I've got a gun 'ere and I'll shoot you if you speak again.

Sir Jasper (*laughing evilly*) Mwa-ha-ha-ha ha-haaa! Very well, *Mister* Humpty Dumpty. Grimes – get rid of him.

Grimes Yes, sir.

Gladys No! No! Not my Humpty! Not over the cliff! He does not deserve that!

Humpty Dumpty Fear not Gladys. Although this is quite a high cliff (*looks – gulps*) there is a chance that I might survive.

Sir Jasper Survive? Survive?!! No-one has ever survived being thrown over this cliff – have they Grimes?

Grimes No-one sir. Absolutely no-one.

Grimes / Sir Jasper Mwa-ha-ha-ha ha-haaa!!!!

Gladys You are evil!

Sir Jasper (*mocking*) Yes I am! It's my job. Now – any last words, Dumpty?

Humpty Dumpty
Gladys. Not to you, Sir Jasper. I will address my final words to my darling Gladys. (*Turning*)

Gladys Yes?

Humpty Dumpty I would like you to remember me for one thing.

Gladys Your hair?

Humpty Dumpty No.

Gladys Your eyes?

Humpty Dumpty No.

Notes on the Genres – *for teachers, not students!*

A few words about each of the Genres / Playwrights.

They are *my* thoughts – other thoughts are available.

Dates for writers are their main periods of productivity. Dates for Genres are approximate.

Shakespeare	1590 – 1616	This play is obviously based on Hamlet. It does not use the iambic pentameter (5x da-DUM in a line) throughout, but there are definitely some in there – which sits uneasy yet upon my pate – being one. In fact the first 5 lines of the guards' exchange is a shared iambic pentameter. This script is in the style of a tragedy, though a comedy or historical version could also be successful. The awful, awful "joke" between the guards is intended to show the often tortured puns which Shakespeare uses in his comic interludes – but I have at least made it intelligible, unlike some of his actual ones.
Melodrama	Late 1700s to late 1800s (theatre), early 1900s (film)	Originally melodrama incorporated music which helped to delineate characters. These tended to be archetypal / stereotypical and the plots were formulaic. Most would have happy endings, but certainly not all. We tend to think of Victorian Melodrama, on which the Humpty script is based, but the origins are 100 years earlier. The Perils of Pauline , one of the first "talkie" films, is heavily reliant on melodramatic techniques and plots and has the original "cliff-hanger". (This was because this would make people return to the cinema the following week to see what happened next = more profit). The genre is fairly discredited today. A comparison that students might understand is to the Wacky Races cartoons which have the basic stock characters in it – The Villain and his Sidekick (Dastardly and Muttley), the Hero and Heroine (Peter Perfect and Penelope Pitstop), plus many ludicrous and impossibly perilous situations.