[OAT]
Ormiston Academies Trust

ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

English curriculum

KS3: War Writing

Teacher guide

Contents

Intent

Students are introduced to writing inspired by WW1 which marked a breach in English literature and is the start of Modernism. The focus is on RC Sherriff's 1928 play, *Journey's End*, as well as a range of poetry and prose written during or set in WW1. The scheme of work has been adapted from that used by Greenshaw Learning Trust.

We have deliberately avoided planning individual lessons in detail and have avoided creating additional PowerPoint resources. As well as providing an overview of the six-weekly sequence of lessons, this Teacher Guide contains advice on how to use the extracts in the Student Workbook as well as suggestions for further reading. The rationale is to encourage teachers to develop their own lesson resources as required, both to suit the requirements of their individual schools and to prompt the kind of independent thinking required to bring the scheme to life for the particular context in which teachers are working. This is based on approach to curriculum planning used at Ormiston Ilkeston Academy.

Vocabulary instruction

Students will be introduced to a range of subject specific academic vocabulary as well as more generic vocabulary which relates to the themes and ideas discussed in the unit of work. The focus here is both on expanding students' working vocabularies in order to make them more confident with academic discourse, but also on the etymological roots of words and morphemes (prefixes and suffixes). We have made extensive use of www.etymonline.com.

Writing

The writing focus in this unit is on the mastery of analytical sentences and utilises the 'couch to 5k' approach being trialled in Ormiston Victory Academy.

Content	**War writing** Student booklet including various poems, prose extracts and non-fiction extracts RC Sheriff, *Journey's End*
Metapho r	Irony Symbolism
Story	How writers convey characters' thoughts Narrative perspective
Argument	Types of argument Extended analysis
Pattern	Noticing poetic patterns (figures and schemes) Scenes and acts
Grammar	Morphology (etymology); creative sentence types
Context	20th century drama (the 'well made' play) Aristotle's dramatic unities 'The Great War' Modernism

There is a video introduction to the War Writing scheme here: https://bit.ly/3AqZu58

Curriculum Related Expectations

Students can define the following terms:

Allusion	Blank verse	Caesura
Climax	Characterisation	Irony
Dialogue	Denouement	Dialect
Form	Figurative language	Formalism
Direct address	Foreshadowing	End-stopping
Structure	Realism	Sibilance
Personification	Rhyming couplet	Juxtaposition
Absurdity	Protagonist	Exposition
Caesura	Enjambement	Individualism
Sonnet		

Students know:

- The influence of the First World War on the development of modernism as a literary movement
- *Journey's End* is a modernist play
- What makes a 'well-made' play
- The 3 different types of irony (dramatic, situational & verbal)
- How Aristotle's 5 part plot structure applies to *Journey's End*
- Characters are vehicles which represent particular tenors
- Themes are tenors represented by different vehicles
- Aristotle's dramatic unities and how these apply to *Journey's End*
- Can explain the effects of irony and symbolism
- How characters from different social classes are presented in *Journey's End*
- How heroism, comradeship, class and power are presented in *Journey's End*

Students can

- use tenor, vehicle and ground to analyse a range of metaphors
- use excellent epithets to evaluate and analyse characters and themes
- Demonstrate understanding of societal anxiety portrayed through war writing
- Evaluate the processes a writer uses to create characters
- Explain the effects of figures and schemes in poetry
- Develop use of conceptual metaphors to craft own detailed description.
- Use a range of create sentence types in descriptive writing (See list of sentence types: https://www.dropbox.com/s/ycnyea7r8ennpr9/Creative%20sentence%20types.pptx?dl=0)
- Summarise chronological events within Journey's End and the development of tension and conflict.
- Evaluate the roles of Stanhope, Osbourne and Raleigh and Sherriff's purpose in creating such characters.
- Discuss thematic links between texts

Vocabulary instruction

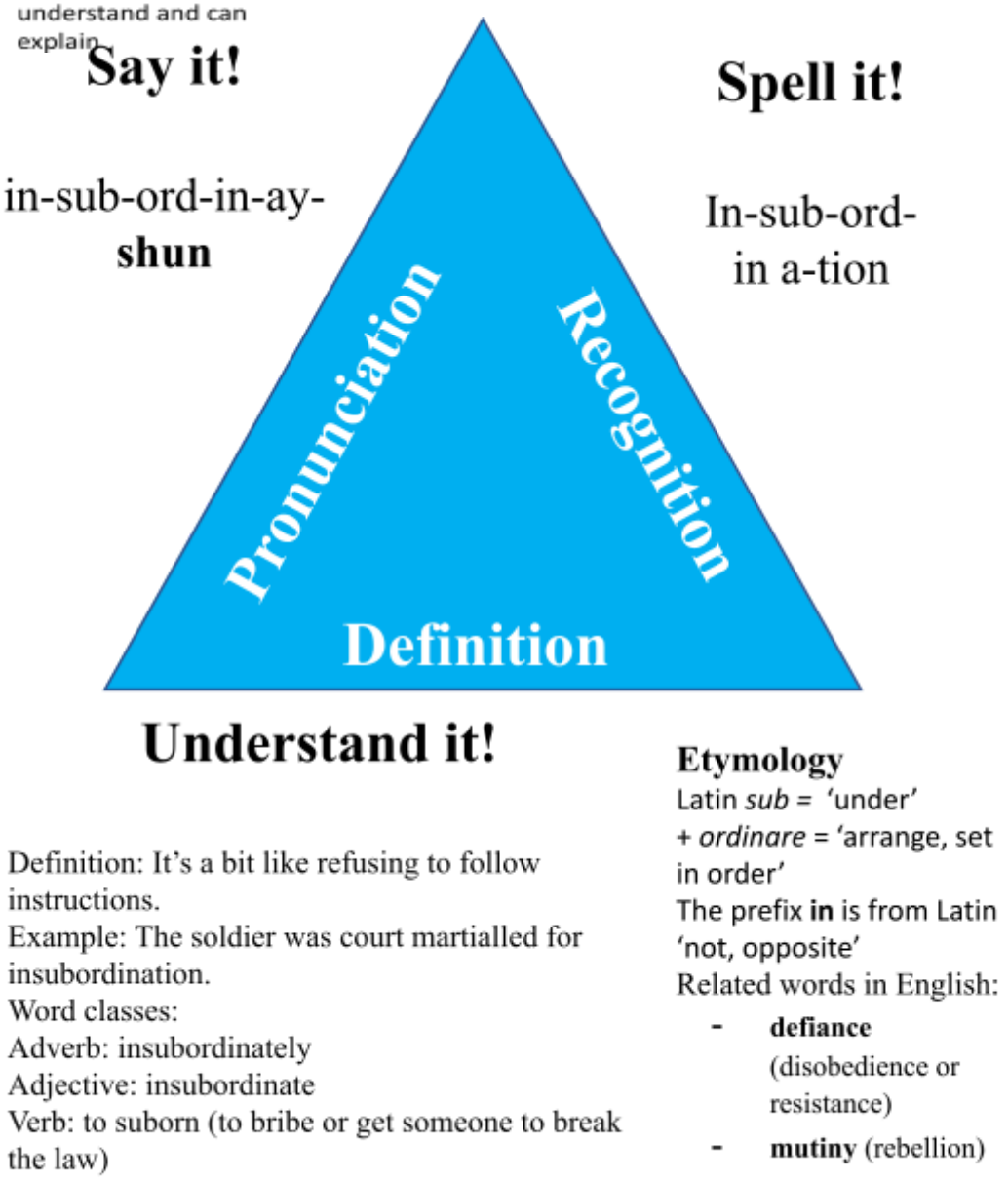
Diagnostic vocabulary testing

With all of the specified vocabulary items, students should be given a quick, diagnostic test where they rate their understanding on a 4-point scale:

Please rate how well you know the word **implacable**:

- Never seen it before
- Seen it, heard it, unsure what it means
- Understand and can sometimes use
- Confidently understand and can explain

New word: *insubordination* (noun)



Subject terminology

Foreshadowing	an advance sign or warning of *what is* to come in the future.	Direct address	Writing in which a speaker or writer communicates a message directly to another individual or group of individuals
End-stopping	A line of poetry ending with punctuation	Monologue	a long speech by one character in a play or film
Structure	the structural framework that underlies the order and manner in which a narrative is presented to a reader, listener, or viewer. The narrative text structures are the plot and the setting.	Dramatic irony	the full significance of a character's words or actions is clear to the audience or reader although unknown to the character.
Realism	Literary movement that represents reality by portraying mundane, everyday experiences as they are in real life, and seeks to tell a story as truthfully as possible instead of romanticising it	Figurative language	words or expressions to convey a *meaning* that is *different* from the literal interpretation.
Dialect	a particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group.	Form	A text's physical structure. Elements like the poem's type, stanza structure, line lengths, rhyme scheme, and rhythm express its form.
Modernism	20th century literary movement which made a self-conscious break with traditional ways of writing, in both poetry and prose fiction writing, and experimented with literary form and expression.	Absurdity	A style of writing in which authors focus on the meaninglessness of the universe and human life. Illogical events happen, and the characters make senseless choices.
Formalism	A school of literary criticism and theory. It's concerned more with the structure of the text than it is with any outside influence on the author.	Individualism	Literary movement that regards the beliefs, needs, well-being, and accomplishments of a single person over those of other individuals and of society.
Sibilance	A figure of speech in which a hissing sound is created within a group of	Personification	A figure of speech which gives human characteristics, such as

	words through the repetition of "s" sounds.		emotions and behaviours, to non-human things, animals, and ideas.
Tragedy	Text dealing with tragic events and having a structure moving from order to disorder, especially one concerning the downfall of the main protagonist.	Rhyming couplet	a rhyming pair of successive lines of verse, typically of the same length.
Denouement	the final part of a play, film, or narrative in which the strands of the plot are drawn together, and matters are explained or resolved.	Juxtaposition	the fact of two things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect. "the juxtaposition of these two images"
Allusions	calling something to mind without mentioning it explicitly.	Climax	the most intense, exciting, or important point of something; the culmination.
Blank verse	verse without rhyme, especially that which uses iambic pentameters.	Sonnet	a poem of fourteen lines using any of a number of formal rhyme schemes, in English typically having ten syllables per line.
Caesura	A break in a line of poetry, usually signalled by a punctuation mark	Protagonist	the leading character or one of the major characters in a play, film, novel, etc.
Enjambment	the continuation of a sentence without a pause beyond the end of a line	Characterisation	the creation or construction of a fictional character.
Exposition	The opening of a story, introducing characters, setting and plot.	Verbal irony	When a writer or character uses a statement with an underlying meaning that contrasts with its literal meaning
Metre	the rhythm of a piece of poetry, from the number and length of feet in a line.	Dialogue	a conversation between two or more people

Excellent Epithets

Stanhope **Appositives:** war hero, company commander, alcoholic, role model	Embittered (adj): angry or resentful at having been treated unfairly bitterness (n)	Flawed (adj): Having weaknesses or imperfections flaw (n)	charismatic (adj): inspiring respect or devotion in others charisma (n)
Raleigh **Appositives:** junior officer, newcomer	Naive (adj): Innocent; lacking experience naivety (n)	Optimistic (adj): Hopeful and confident about the future optimism (n)	Disillusioned (adj): Disappointed in someone or something disillusion (n)
Osborne **Appositives:** father figure, second-in-command	Loyal (adj): having high moral standards loyalty (n)	Stoic (adj): Able to endure pain or hardship without complaint stoicism (n)	Dutiful (adj): Doing what is required, conscientious duty (n)

Themes

- Friendship and Human Interaction
- Anticipation, Expectations, and Uncertainty
- Fear and Coping
- Repetition, Futility, and Perspective

Futile (adj): Pointless or useless. Latin *futilis* 'leaky, unreliable'

futility (n) futilely (adv)

Courageous (adj) The ability to act even if scared. Latin *cor* 'heart'

Courage (n)

Patriotic (adj) Being devoted to your country. Greek *patriotes* 'fellow countryman,' from *pater* 'father'.

Patriotism (n); patriot (n)

Brutal (adj) Acting with savage physical violence or great cruelty. Latin *brutus* 'heavy, dull, stupid, insensible, unreasonable'

Brutality (n); brute (n)

Nationalist (adj) Feeling of Identification with one's nation, especially to the detriment of the interests of other nations. Latin *natus* 'be born'

Nationalism (n); nation (n)

Ambivalent (adj) Having mixed feelings about something. Latin ambi 'be on both sides' + *valentia* 'strength'

Ambivalence (n)

Chaotic (adj) In a state of complete confusion and disorder. Greek *khaos* 'abyss, that which gapes wide open; vast and empty,"

Chaos (n)

Fatuous (adj) Silly and pointless. Latin *fatuus* "foolish, silly"

Fatuousness (n)

Insubordinate (adj) Defiance of authority. Latin *sub* 'under' + *ordinare* 'arrange, set in order'

The prefix **in** is from Latin 'not, opposite'

Insubordination (n)

Inadequate (adj) Insufficient for a purpose. Latin *ad* 'make level' + *aequus* 'equal, even'

Inadequacy (n)

Incompetent (adj) Not having the necessary skills to do something. Latin *in-* 'not' + *competere* 'coincide, agree'

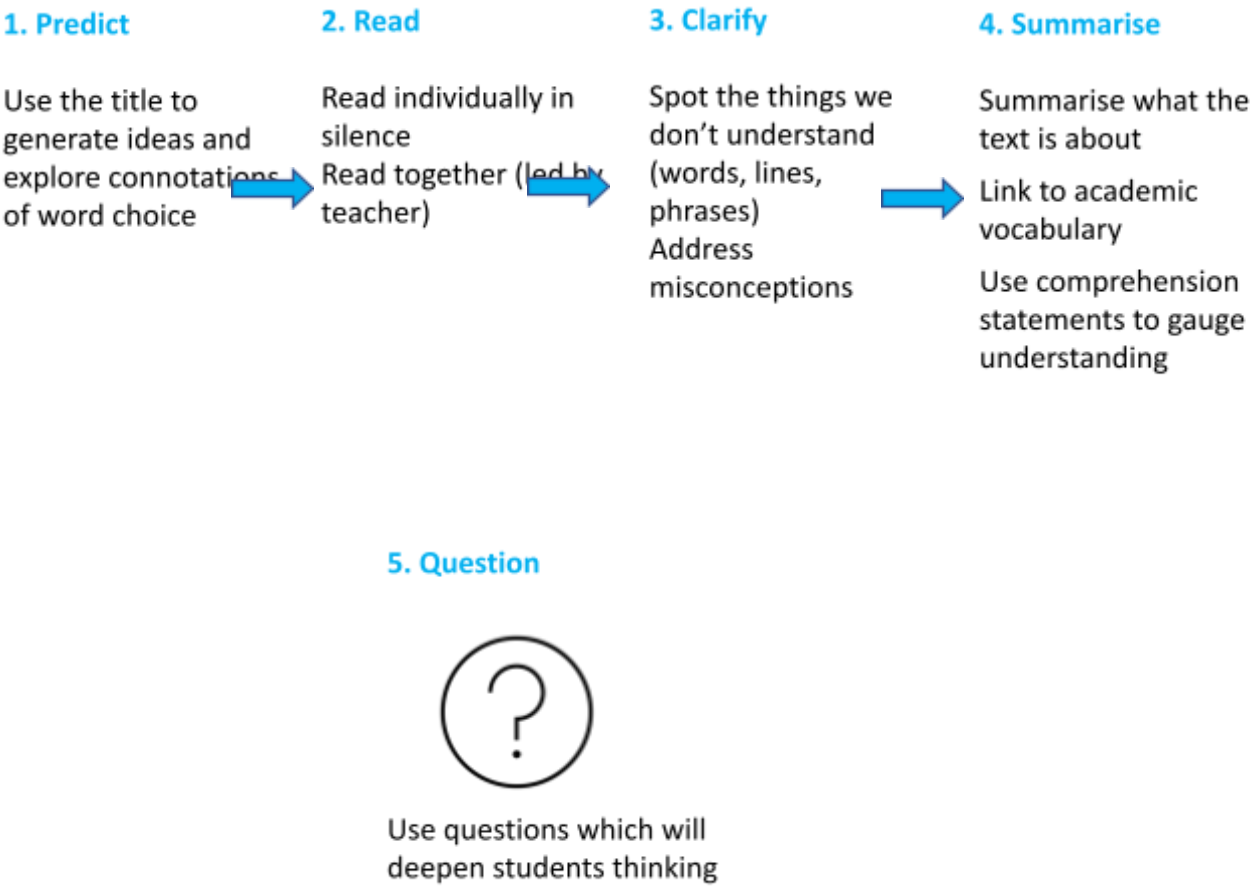
Incompetence (n)

Comradely (adj) pleasant and friendly to other people

Comradeship (n) comrade (n)

Reading strategy: how to read a challenging text

Early novels present particular challenges to our students, but also great opportunities. Before they can begin to compare and analyse, students will need to have a solid foundation in comprehension.
Below is a suggested strategy to help with this.



The Deconstructed Essay

Overview video on National College

Year 7: Sentences 1, 3 and 4 should be taught explicitly during Year 7 and practised to the point of mastery.

Sentence 1. Construct personal viewpoints in the form of thesis statements		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
One sentence to answer the question with two different viewpoints Begin with a subordinating conjunction: Whereas, Despite, Although, At first glance, Because Use a comma to pivot between viewpoints Use at least three adjectives (and appositives)	Think of the surface meaning and then a deeper meaning which is less obvious and more interesting. (*At first glance*) Acknowledge two or more contrasting interpretations (*Although, Despite, Whereas*) Acknowledge a causal link between two ideas (*Because*) Select adjectives + appositives from the **excellent epithets**.	At first glance [text] is about _____, but at a deeper level _____. Although [the text] appears to be about _____, it is also referring to _____. Because [first idea], [second idea.] Despite [character + epithet], they can also be seen as [character + epithet.]

Thesis statements on National College

Sentence 2 - Focus on the effects of the whole text and controlling ideas – might best be taught later on (we have recommended that it be given particular attention in Year 8. However, when students come to reconstruct the notion of controlling ideas, they should be writing this immediately after their thesis statement. (See below)

Sentence 3. Use the thesis statement to create topic sentences		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
Each epithet will become the main point of a topic sentence. Adjectives must be transformed into noun phrases. E.g., Implacable becomes implacability Noun phrase must be followed by a verb. The rest of the sentence must link to the question being answered.	Think about the epithets used in the thesis statement to consider how each can be turned into a noun to be explored in a separate topic sentence. Consider how each noun phrase links to the question being answered.	[character, theme, or writer] + [change adjective to noun] + [verb] + [link back to question].

Topic sentence video on National College

Sentence 4. Select and embed relevant textual detail		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
Select evidence that relates to the point being made in topic sentences Use short, precise parts of the text (not whole lines) Place the quote within a sentence Place the quote inside single quotation marks	Select a part of the text which is interesting and that you'll have something that isn't obvious to say about it. Embed "quotations" into sentences. Use a comma before beginning a sentence length quotation. Use an ellipsis (…) to show where words have been left out of a quotation.	The writer refers to _____ as '_____' and '_____'. The writer compares _____ to '_____'. When the text states, '_____' it reminds the reader of _____. [Character] says, "_____ … _____," conveying _____. [Writer] repeats, "_____," because _____.

Reference what the quote is suggesting		

Embedding evidence on National College

Year 8

Sentences 2, 5 and 6 should be taught explicitly during Year 7 and practised to the point of mastery. Sentences 1, 3 and 4 should be integrated and practised alongside the new essay sentences.

Sentence 2. Focus on the effects of the whole text and controlling ideas		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
Recall the controlling ideas/themes/intentions explored in the text Think about how this extract/question addresses these themes and ideas Consider whether this is consistent throughout the entire text This sentence comes second in the essay writing sequence. It should be seen as part of the essay's introduction	What have you been taught about this text? Or, what themes, ideas can you remember? What is it about the extract that makes you think this? How is this similar/different to other texts you've studied, or other parts of *this* text? How do ideas/themes change or develop?	[Text] **explores** the idea/theme of _____ . [Extract] exemplifies /reinforces/ amplifies/ the theme of _____. [Writer] challenges/contradicts ideas about _____.

Controlling idea sentences on National College

Sentence 5. Analyse a writer's use of language, structure and form		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
Use terminology accurately Think about <u>effect</u> not meaning	What is the writer trying to achieve in this text? Zoom in: why might the writer have used this specific word or phrase? Is it part of a pattern of similar words? What *effect* does it create? Zoom out: do your ideas make sense *in this context*?	This [literary device] **conveys** a sense of _____. [Writer] uses [device] to **depict/portray/suggest** _____. Furthermore, the word '_____' **evokes** an image/atmosphere/feeling of _____.

Sentence 6. Evaluate the writer's intent		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
Use of adverb opener with a comma to follow Reference to theme or literary concept Teach a range of potential literary intents. E.g., to criticise, to expose, to condemn, to celebrate or to convince	Consider why the writer might have written the text. What message might they want the reader to think about?	**Thus**, [writer] is drawing the reader's attention to_____. **Hence**, [writer] is challenging ideas about_____. **Consequently**, [writer] is highlighting_____.

Evaluate sentence on National College

Year 9

Sentences 7, 8 and 9 should be taught explicitly during Year 7 and practised to the point of mastery. All other sentences should continue to be integrated and practised alongside the new essay sentences.

Sentence 7. Compare texts in relation to literary concepts, ideas and methods		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
Identify a clear similarity or difference between the two poems Use comparative discourse markers Use commas after comparative discourse markers Reference to theme or literary concept	Think of interesting similarities and differences in relation to ideas, concepts or methods between the novels studied. *Humour is equally significant in both texts. Nonetheless, in ' Evelina' Burney directs this towards younger men who think too highly of themselves, whereas in 'Pride and Prejudice' Austen directs it to marriage itself, where both men and women are seen to be equally at fault.*	Both texts explore the concept of _____ . _____ is equally significant in both texts. In [*Julius Caesar*] it is conveyed through _____, **whereas** in [MLK's speech] it is portrayed as _____ **Conversely**, in [*Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare] presents [focus of the question] as _____. **Similarly**, in [*Paradise Lost*, Milton] _____. **Likewise**, in [text] _____.

Sentence 8. Linking to context		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
Identify a relevant contextual point. Use adverbial time phrases. Use commas after the time phrase. Link to writer/text using 'and' or 'but' Reference to writer's intent and themes.	Be selective in your use of context: does it add to your overall argument? *At the time, [women were expected to behave according to very strict social rules] and [Burney] shows [the pressure young women were under socially and morally.]*	**At the time,** [relevant context] and [writer] depicts [reference to text]. **Contextually,** people were very concerned about [specific social rule], and [writer] employs [technique] to show [writer's intent related to social rule]. **In the mid 18th century**, [relevant context] but writers like [named writer] endeavoured to convey [writer's intention].

Context sentence video on National College

Sentence 9. Extend: recognising different arguments		
Teach	**Model**	**Write**
Identify an opposing point that you can refute/contradict. Use subordinating conjunctions. Use commas after subordinating conjunctions. Reference to theme or literary concept	Be sure to choose an opposing point that you are sure you can argue against. Make your sentence a conversation (They say, I say) *Even though it is possible to argue that [Fielding presents a more polished novel than Richardson,] [Pamela] is still [a compelling and persuasive story.]*	**Even though it is possible to argue that**, [opposing point], it is still the case that [your point]. **Although it may be suggested that…** **Whilst it could be argued that…** While [writer] may seem to saying [opposing idea], an alternative interpretation might be…

Extend sentence on National College

Slow Writing – War

The C25K approach to descriptive/transactional is covered in the explicit teaching of the 30 creative sentence types. In this module, the sentence types that need to be explicitly taught are:

24. Let Loose Sentence: *There was a sudden warmth to the deep blackness that held me, the glossy tree trunks, the criss-crossing of a million dark branches, the thicker boughs barring my way, the undersides of the leaves obscuring the sun, and the crowns of all the trees flickering in the light of a faraway day.*

25. Simile Start: *Like a bird knocked out of the sky, I was thrown to the ground as though for the last time.*

Students need to practice using these sentence types to the point of mastery. Previously taught sentence types that will need regular recapping and practice are:

1. Comma Sandwich
2. More, More, More Sentence / Less, Less, Less Sentence
3. Comparative, More, More Sentence
4. Semi-colon Split
5. Colon Clarification
6. Three Verb Sentence
7. Not, Nor, Nor Sentence
8. Prepositional Push Off
9. Never Did Than
10. The Writer's Aside
11. The So So Sentence
12. The Big Because
13. But None More Than Sentence
14. Past participle start (–ed)
15. Whoever/ Whenever/ Whichever
16. Adjective Attack
17. End Loaded Sentence
18. Present participle start (–ing)
19. The As If Pivot
20. The As If Avalanche
21. Three Adjective Punch
22. Almost, Almost, When
23. Repeat & reload

In addition, students need regular practice of using curriculum content to produce Slow Writing responses. For example, after students have read Owen's poems, there is an opportunity for a slow writing exercise which should include the sentences which have been taught. The slow writing prompt could be as follows:

Describe conditions for soldiers during WW1:.

1. Let loose sentence
2. Semi colon split
3. Simile start
4. Adjective attack
5. End loaded sentence

Model:

It had all become normal, the constant thundering of the guns, the cold shivering into our bones, our bodies itching with filth and lice, the moaning of the wondered and the stench of the dead, all a normal part of life. A sad sort of life; more like living death. Like men dying of thirst, we drank down every last moment of peace and comfort. Cold and forbidding, we knew death was around every corner. After months of hardship, jumping at every break in the routine, soaked with the dread that each day would be our last, we were exhausted by the nearness of sudden and violent death.

Structured discussion

- Reading should be followed with structured discussion where teachers ask planned questions about the aspect of the text being studied that students most need to remember and think about.
- This should include scaffolded practice of academic discourse mediated by the teacher where students are expected to 'speak like an essay.'

A structured discussion session might take the following form:

TEACHER: Hassan, what impression do we get of God's relationship to Noah?

HASSAN: Noah does what God tells him to do.

TEACHER: Can you say that in a full sentence beginning "The impression readers get of the God's relationship to Noah is that… "?

HASSAN: The impression readers get of the God's relationship to Noah is that God is in charge?

TEACHER: That's better. Ben, what did Hassan just say?

BEN: The impression readers get of the God's relationship with Noah is … uh…

TEACHER: OK. He said, "The impression readers get of the God's relationship to Noah is that God is in charge." What did I just say?

BEN: The impression readers get of the God's relationship to is that God is in charge.

TEACHER: Good. Ahmed, what did Ben just say?

Ahmed: He said, "The impression readers get of the God's relationship to Noah is that God is in charge."

TEACHER: Good. Maia, how do we know that God is in charge?

MAIA: Um, Zeus says… "God tells Noah to build the Ark and Noah does it."

TEACHER: Yes, can you say that so that it sounds more like an essay?

MAIA: We know that God is in charge because to tells Noah to build an Ark and Noah does what he's told.

TEACHER: That's a good effort. Jake, can you improve on what Maia said using the word 'obedient'? Start by saying, The impression readers get of Noah's relationship with God

JAKE: Er… The impression readers get of Noah's relationship with God is that he's … er… obedient?

TEACHER: Yes. Now add 'because' to the end of that sentence.

JAKE: The impression readers get of Noah's relationship with God is that he's obedient because when God tells him to build the Ark he does it."

TEACHER: Excellent. Shima, what did Jake just say?

Overview of sequencing

Students begin with an introduction to a sample of poetry (mainly from WW1) as well as extracts from modern novels written about the period, before going on to read RC Sherriff's play *Journey's End.*

Concepts: sonnet form; non-fiction forms Texts: ● Cowardice white feather, Harold Carter ● A Brass Hat in No Man's Land ● Wilfred Owen, 'Futility' ● BBC adaptation of JE (10 mins) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxCHp_GMbi4&ab_channel=EdwardPetherbridge	
Section 6 - How important is comradeship? Concepts: narrative perspective; how writer's convey characters' thoughts Texts: - All Quiet on the Western Front Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*	100-116

Section 1 - Is war a suitable subject for literature?

Key questions	Core knowledge	Terminology & vocabulary	Discussion, reading & writing
Big questions: **Is war a suitable subject for literature?** **How do different forms of literature change our perceptions of war?** **Key questions:** When did World War 1 take place? How were women's experiences of WW1 different to men's? (Home front vs the front)	World War 1 – 1914-1918 Many of the works during and about the war were written by men because of the war's intense demand on the young men of that generation; however, a number of women created literature about the war, often observing the effects of the war on soldiers, domestic spaces, and the Homefront more generally. The spread of education in Britain in the decades leading up to World War I meant that British soldiers and the British public of all classes were literate. Professional and amateur authors were prolific during and after the war and found a market for their works Texts: - Julian Grenfell's 'Into Battle' - Sassoon's The General' - Owen's Anthem for Doomed Youth - McCrae's 'In Flanders Field' - Jesse Pope's 'Who's for the Game?' - Margaret Postgate Cole's 'The Falling Leaves' - Lois Clarke's 'Picture from the Blitz'. - Extracts from Faulkner's *Birdsong* - Extract from Barker's *Regeneration* - Extract from *Blackadder Goes Fourth*	**Terminology** sonnet scene dialogue **Vocabulary** **conflict** **glory** **patriotism** **courage** **incompetent**	**Structured discussions**: What are the differences between poetry, prose and plays? **Couch to 5 k writing**: How do writers present attitudes to war? How are plays different to other literary forms? Rewrite 1 of the poems as a prose description. **Reading fluency**: Any of the poems

Expert knowledge

- Literature was produced throughout the war - with women, as well as men, feeling the need to record their experiences- but it was in the late 1920s and early 1930s that Britain had a boom in publication of war literature.
- Published poets wrote over two thousand poems about and during the war. However, only a small fraction still is known today, and several poets that were popular with contemporary readers are now obscure. An orthodox selection of poets and poems emerged during the 1960s, which often remains the standard in modern collections and distorts the impression of World War I poetry. This selection tends to emphasise the horror of war, suffering, tragedy and anger against those that wage war.
- Wilfred Owen was killed in battle; but his poems created at the front did achieve popular attention after the war's end. In preparing for the publication of his collected poems, Owen tried to explain: "This book is not about heroes. English poetry is not yet fit to speak of them. Nor is it about deeds, or lands, nor anything about glory, honour, might, majesty, dominion, or power, except War. Above all I am not concerned with Poetry. My subject is War, and the pity of War. The Poetry is in the pity."

A suggested sequence of lessons

Lesson 1: An introduction to a sample of WW1 poetry to examine the different approaches poets have used to describe their experiences of war.

Recap prior knowledge:

Teach:
- Introduce students to the words 'conflict' and 'glory'
- Read four WW1 poems: Julian Grenfell's 'Into Battle', Sassoon's The General', Owen's Anthem for Doomed Youth & McCrae's 'In Flanders Field'
- Discuss the similarities & What do students already know about WW1?
- differences and ask students to make a judgement of which they think is 'best'
- *How* should poets write about war?

Process:
- Students to devise 3 questions for the poet of their chosen poem (what is it about? why did you write it? What did you mean by …? Etc.)
- If time, discuss the answers to some of these questions.

Check understanding:
- Which poems do the following lines come from:
    - "O patient eyes, courageous hearts!"
    - "most of 'em dead"
    - "The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall"
    - "We shall not sleep, though poppies grow"
- Ask students to explain how they know.

Lesson 2: To compare the ways men and women approach writing about war.

Recap prior knowledge:
- What type of poem is Anthem for Doomed Youth?
- When did John McCrae die?
- Name one of Siegfried Sassoon's poems
- What was Julian Grenfell's attitude to war?
- What does 'conflict' mean?

Teach:
- Introduce the word 'patriotism'
- How was women's experience of WW1 different to men's? (Home front vs the front)
- Read through Jesse Pope's 'Who's for the Game?', Margaret Postgate Cole's 'The Falling Leaves', Lois Clarke's 'Picture from the Blitz'.

Process:
- Discuss: do men and women write differently about war?
- Now show students Ivor Gurney's 'To His Love' but conceal poet & title: does it feel like it's written by a man or woman? Why?

Check understanding:
- Sentence expanding:
    - Men and women wrote differently about WW1 because [provide a reason]
    - Men and women wrote differently about WW1 but [suggest a similarity]
    - Men and women wrote differently about WW1 so [explain how this might affect our views of the poetry written by men and women]

Lesson 3: To compare some of the differences in the ways writers express ideas in poetry and prose

Recap:
- What's the title of Jessie Pope's most famous poem?
- Which poem was set in WW2?
- What word class is 'courageous?
- What does glory mean?
- Which poems display patriotism?

Teach:
- Introduce the word 'courage'
- Read extracts from *Birdsong and Regeneration*

Process:
- Display the question: "How do writers present attitudes to war?"
- Explain that students will write a single sentence thesis statement. Use the model: "Although Faulks depicts war as _____, in Grenfell's poem 'Into Battle' it is presented as _____."
- Explain the role of the subordinating conjunction (signals a change in direction) and the comma (pivots between contrasting ideas)
- Ask students to suggest ideas to fill in the subordinate and main clauses.

Check understanding:
- Students write their own one sentence thesis statement for the question "Compare how war is presented in two different literary forms." Answer must begin with "Although…" subordinate clause = presentation of war in Birdsong; main clause = presentation of war in one of the poems.

Lesson 4: Introduction to the differences between the play form and other forms of literature
Recap:
- Give an example of a subordinating conjunction
- What is 'prose'?
- What does 'patriotism' mean?
- Who wrote 'Anthem for Doomed Youth'?
- What is a thesis statement?

Teach:
- Introduce the word 'incompetent'

- Read extract from *Blackadder*.
- Discussion: What are the differences between poetry, prose and plays? Concentrate on the idea that plays are performed and interpreted by director/actors; the script is only part of the whole.

Process:
- Students to write one sentence thesis statement for the question: "How are plays different to other literary forms?"
- Answer must start with the subordinating conjunction 'Because' (*Because* plays only include dialogue and stage directions, they don't give the audience direct access to characters' thoughts and feelings.)

Check understanding:
- Sentence combining: [combine the following 3 sentences into one sentence – this may need some modelling. See The Writing Revolution for examples]
    - Plays are divided into scenes and acts.
    - Plays include stage directions to instruct actors on how to perform lines.
    - Plays mainly consist of the dialogue spoken by actors.

Annotated copies of texts from students' workbook

Into Battle, Julian Grenfell

The naked eart
And with green
Leans to the su
And quivers in
And life is colour and warmth and light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
And who dies fighting has increase.

Stanza 1
- Positive imagery which suggests new life, safety & pleasure: "warm with spring," "sun's glorifying kiss," "loving breeze"
- Fighting and death in battle are seen as natural and right

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees a newer birth;
And when his fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

Stanza 2
- Fighting is natural (the link with the sun and earth and "new birth")
- Death in battle is rewarded with "great rest"

All the bright company of Heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend;
They gently speak in the windy weather,
They guide to valley and ridge's end.

Stanzas 3 & 4
- Links to mythical heroes in the stars
- Suggests an eternal reward "bright company of heaven"
- The trees are seen to encourage and guide those who fight

The kestrel hovering by day,
And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him swift and keen as they,
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him 'Brother, brother,
If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you will not sing another;
Brother, sing!'

Stanzas 5 & 6
- Soldiers are compared favourably to birds of prey
- Soldiers are part of the natural word and in tune with nature

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers;
O patient eyes, courageous hearts!
And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only joy of battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Stanza 7
- Acknowledges the fear & dread of waiting for battle
- Horse (nature) provide a role model for soldiers

Stanzas 8-9
- "joy of battle" takes away men's conscious minds and makes them "blind"
- This blindness – not caring about death - makes men who they are meant to be "Destined Will"
- Although the final stanza ends with "moans", the dead are held with "strong hands" and "soft wings" suggesting they

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That is be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Siegfried Sassoon

The General

"Good-morning, good-morning!" the General said
When we met him last week on our way to the line.
Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of 'em dead,
And we're cursing his staff for incompetent swine.
"He's a cheery old card," grunted Harry to Jack
As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack.

But he did for them both by his plan of attack.

Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)

Anthem for Doomed Youth

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.[1]
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, -
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing down of blinds.

- The use of a sonnet – traditionally used for love poetry
- "passing-bells" – evokes a funeral
- "cattle" suggest the scale of death as well as disgust at how men are treated
- Instead of a proper church service, the men's death is only marked by the war personified: "wailing shells" the rifles "patter out hasty orisons" (prayers)
- The volta is marked by the question at the start of the sestet
- The bleakness of the situation is contrasted with the quiet beauty of the language ('holy glimmers,' 'tenderness of patient minds')
- Although there won't be flowers or candles, these men will be mourned by the close of everyday
- Clear contrasts with Sassoon's cynicism and Grenfell's glorification of war

John McCrae (1872-1918)

In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

- Another clear contrast – this is also quiet and mournful but is less bitter and angry than Owen.
- Very simple language and structure make this seem 'true'
- This was the first use of poppies to represent the dead of WW1
- Stanza 1 – note the contrast between nature and "the guns below" – very different to Grenfell
- Stanza 2: "We" (and "our" in stanza 1) suggests the poem is spoken by those who have been killed
- Repetition of "loved" makes their death more tragic
- Stanza 3: Clear change of tone and mood: those who lived are urged to continue the fight "ye" makes this sound religious, holy
- Becomes more like Grenfell than Owen or Sassoon

[1] Orisons = prayers

Jesse Pope (1868-1941)

Who's for the Game?

Who's for the game, the biggest that's played,
The red crashing game of a fight?
Who'll grip and tackle the job unafraid?
And who thinks he'd rather sit tight?
Who'll toe the line for the signal to 'Go!'?
Who'll give his country a hand?
Who wants a turn to himself in the show?
And who wants a seat in the stand?
Who knows it won't be a picnic – not much-
Yet eagerly shoulders a gun?
Who would much rather come back with a crutch
Than lie low and be out of the fun?
Come along, lads –
But you'll come on all right –
For there's only one course to pursue,
Your country is up to her neck in a fight,
And she's looking and calling for you.

- The focus here should be the surprise of a woman urging men to fight
- The use of questions feels like an accusation for those who haven't enlisted
- Words like "show" & ""seat in the stand" makes the war sound fun and exciting
- Men are told it's better to "come back with a crutch" (be injured) than to miss "the fun"
- Direct address "you" makes this more personal
- Urges "lads" to do their duty and be patriotic for "your country"
- Why are they told "you'll come on all right" – suggests they have no choice but to join up "there's only one course" Is there an implied threat?

Margaret Postgate Cole (1893-1980)

The Falling Leaves

November 1915

Today, as I rode by,
I saw the brown leaves dropping from their tree
In a still afternoon,
When no wind whirled them whistling to the sky,
But thickly, silently,
They fell, like snowflakes wiping out the noon;
And wandered slowly thence
For thinking of a gallant multitude
Which now all withering lay,
Slain by no wind of age or pestilence,
But in their beauty strewed
Like snowflakes falling on the Flemish clay.

- Title suggests death and decay (as does November
- The brown leaves represent dying soldiers
- The simile "like snowflakes" emphasises their huge number (as well as their individuality & uniqueness)
- "Wiping out the noon" suggests day (good) has been made dark (evil)
- "Gallant" means brave and is often used to describe soldiers
- Like the dead leaves "the gallant multitude" have "withered" and lost their beauty
- Only in the last two words is the link to WW1 made explicit – does this make the tragedy more universal?
- Which of the men's poems is this most similar to? (Owen or McCrae?)

Lois Clark

Picture from the Blitz

After all these years
I can still close my eyes and see
her sitting there,
in her big armchair,
grotesque under an open sky,
framed by the jagged lines of her broken house.

Sitting there,
a plump homely person,
steel needles still in her work-rough hands;
grey with dust, stiff with shock,
but breathing,
no blood or distorted limbs;
breathing but stiff with shock,
knitting unravelling on her apron'd knee.

They have taken the stretchers off my car
and I am running
under the pattering flack
over a mangled garden;
treading on something soft
and fighting the rising nausea –
only a far-flung cushion, bleeding feathers.

They lift her gently
out of her great armchair,
tenderly,
under the open sky,
a shock-frozen woman trailing khaki wool.

- Unlike the other poems, this is written about WW2
- It's written from the 'present' looking back "after all these years"
- Who is "her"? What is suggested by "grotesque" and "jagged"?

Stanza 2
- The woman is made more human "plump homely person")
- She's still alive "but breathing"
- The knitting suggests guts or a serious wound

Stanza 3
- Switch back to "I" and present tense
- Action "running", "treading", "fighting"
- What is the "something soft"? The "nausea" makes us think the worst
- Bathos: a cushion not a body part

Stanza 4
- Now shifts to "they" – more passive
- The tenderness is contrasted with the effects of bombing
- Khaki is the colour of soldiers' uniforms: links the Blitz to the front-line

Ivor Gurney (1890-1937)

To His Love

He's gone, and all our plans
Are useless indeed.
We'll walk no more on Cotswold
Where the sheep feed
Quietly and take no heed.

His body that was so quick
Is not as you
Knew it, on Severn river
Under the blue
Driving our small boat through.

You would not know him now ...
But still he died
Nobly, so cover him over
With violets of pride
Purple from Severn side.

Cover him, cover him soon!
And with thick-set
Masses of memoried flowers—
Hide that red wet
Thing I must somehow forget.

- When compared to all the other poems, students may guess that this is written by a woman
- Remembers the ordinariness of the countryside

Stanza 2

- "His body" adds to the sense that this may be from the perspective of a mourning wife or girlfriend
- Past tense of "that was" is contrasted to rowing the boat

Stanza 3

- The suggestion that he is unrecognisable because of his violent death
- Ellipsis breaks off – makes it seem that the speaker can't find the words to express their feelings
- The enjambement of "he died/ Nobly" suggests it doesn't really matter how he died – he still deserves to be covered with flowers

Stanza 4

- Exclamation mark introduces urgency
- "Masses of memoried" – alliteration exaggerates the 'grave' of flowers as well as the fold memories of the man in life
- The dash breaks off the train of thought
- 'that red wet/Thing' is horrific despite being simple and understated – makes the urgency clearer: the speaker needs to forget what happened and only remember the good times.

Extract from *Birdsong* by Sebastian Faulks

The second hand of his watch in slow motion. Twenty-nine past. The whistle in his mouth. His foot on the ladder. He swallowed hard and blew.[2]

He clambered out and looked around him. It was for a moment completely quiet as the bombardment ended and the German guns also stopped. Skylarks wheeled and sang high in the cloudless sky. He felt alone, as though he had stumbled on this fresh world at the instant of its creation.[3]

Then the artillery began to lay down the first barrage and the German machine guns resumed. To his left Stephen saw men trying to emerge from the trench but being smashed by bullets before they could stand.[4] The gaps in the wire became jammed with bodies. Behind him the men were coming up. He saw Gray run along the top of the trench, shouting encouragement.

He walked hesitatingly forward[5], his skin tensed for the feeling of metal tearing flesh. He turned his body sideways, tenderly, to protect his eyes. He was hunched like an old woman in the cocoon of tearing noise.[6]

Byrne was walking beside him at the slow pace required by their orders.[7] Stephen glanced to his right. He could see a long, wavering line of khaki, primitive dolls[8] progressing in tense deliberate steps, going down with a silent flap of arms, replaced, falling, continuing as though walking into a gale. He tried to catch Byrne's eye but failed. The sound of machine guns was varied by the crack of snipers and the roar of the barrage ahead of them.

He saw Hunt fall to his right. Studd bent to help him and Stephen saw his head opening up bright red[9] under machine gun bullets as his helmet fell away.

His feet pressed onwards gingerly over the broken ground. After twenty or thirty yards there came a feeling that he was floating above his body, that it had taken on an automatic life of its own over which he had no power. It was as though he had become detached, in a dream, from the metal air[10] through which his flesh was walking. In this trance there was a kind of relief, something close to hilarity.[11]

Ten yards ahead and to the right was Colonel Barclay. He was carrying a sword.[12]

Stephen went down. Some force had blown him. He was in a dip in the ground with a bleeding man, shivering. The barrage was too far ahead. Now the German guns were placing a curtain of their own. Shrapnel was blasting its jagged cones through any air space not filled by the machine guns.

All that metal will not find room enough, Stephen thought. It must crash and strike sparks above them. The man with him was screaming inaudibly. Stephen wrapped his dressing round the man's leg, then looked at himself. There was no wound.[13] He crawled to the rim of the shellhole. There were others ahead of him. He stood up and began to walk again.

Perhaps with them he would be safer. He felt nothing as he crossed the pitted land on which humps of khaki lay every few yards. The load on his back was heavy. He looked behind and saw a second line walking into the

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[2] This combination of description and feeling is similar to descriptions in poetry
[3] …but now, the focus on movement feels different to poems. We're 'with' Stephen as he looks out at the battle field.
[4] The futility of being machine gunned before battle has even started
[5] Very different from Grenfell's 'Into Battle'
[6] The antithesis of a soldier – smile highlights his vulnerability
[7] Why would soldier be ordered to walk slowly when under fire?
[8] Unreal – soldiers are 'play things'
[9] Remind us of Gurney's 'red wet thing'
[10] Suggests that the air is made of bullets
[11] Why would this feel funny? Absurdity of the situation?
[12] Pointless & ineffectual. A symbol of impotence
[13] Short sentence emphasises his surprise

barrage in no man's land. They were hurled up like waves breaking backwards into the sea. Bodies were starting to pile and clog the progress.

There was a man beside him missing part of his face, but walking in the same dreamlike state, his rifle pressing forward. His nose dangled and Stephen could see his teeth through the missing cheek.[14] The noise was unlike anything he had heard before. It lay against his skin[15], shaking his bones. Remembering his order not to stop for those behind him, he pressed slowly on, and as the smoke lifted in front of him he saw the German wire.

It had not been cut. Men were running up and down it in turmoil, looking for a way through. They were caught in the coils where they brought down torrents of machine gun fire. Their bodies jerked up and down, twisting and jumping. Still they tried. Two men were clipping vainly with their cutters among the corpses, their movement bringing the sharp disdainful fire of a sniper. They lay still.

The final paragraph is bookended by short sentences which contain the frantic action of the dying soldiers. All that effort, wasted.

[14] The horror is presented matter of factly, as if there is nothing unusual going on
[15] Very poetic – sound is given weight and texture

***Regeneration* by Pat Barker**

He woke to a dugout smell of wet sandbags and stale farts.[16] He curled his toes inside his wet boots[17] and felt the creak and sag of chicken wire as he turned towards the table. The usual jumble: paper, bottles, mugs, the black-boxed field telephone, a couple of revolvers – all lit by a single candle stuck to the wood in a pool of its own grease. A barely perceptible thinning of the darkness around the gas curtain told him it must be nearly dawn.[18] And sure enough, a few minutes later Sanderson lifted the curtain and shouted, 'Stand-to!' The bulky forms on the other bunks stirred, groaned, groped for revolvers. Soon they were all trying to climb out of the dugout, difficult because rain and recent near-hits had turned the steps into a muddy slide. All along the trench men were crawling out of funk holes. He clumped along the duckboards to his position, smelling the green, ratty, decomposing smell, stretching the muscles of his face into a smile whenever the men looked up. Then an hour of standing, stiff and shivery, watching dawn grow.[19]

He had first trench watch. He gulped a mug of chlorine-tasting tea, and then started walking along to the outermost position on their left. A smell of bacon frying. In the third fire bay he found Sawdon and Towers crouched over a small fire made out of shredded sandbags and candle ends, coaxing the flames. He stopped to chat for a few minutes, and Towers, blinking under the green mushroom helmet, looked up and offered him tea. A quiet day, he thought, walking on. Not like the last few days, when the bombardment had gone on for seventy hours, and they'd stood to five times expecting a German counterattack. Damage from that bombardment was everywhere: crumbling parapets, flooded saps, dugouts with gagged mouths.[20]

He'd gone, perhaps, three fire bays along when he heard the whoop of a shell, and, spinning round, saw the scrawl of dusty brown smoke already drifting away. He thought it'd gone clear over, but then he heard a cry and, feeling sick in his stomach, he ran back. Logan was there already. It must have been Logan's cry he heard, for nothing in that devastation could have had a voice. A conical black hole, still smoking, had been driven into the side of the trench. Of the kettle, the frying-pan, the carefully tended fire, there was no sign, and not much of Sawdon and Towers either, or not much that was recognisable.[21]

There was a pile of sandbags and shovels close by, stacked against the parapet by a returning work party. He reached for a shovel. Logan picked up a sandbag and held it open, and he began shovelling soil, flesh and splinters of blackened bone into the bag. As he shovelled, he retched. He felt something jar against his teeth and saw that Logan was offering him a rum bottle. He forced down bile and rum together. Logan kept his face averted as the shovelling went on. He was swearing under his breath, steadily, blasphemously, obscenely, inventively. Somebody came running. 'Don't stand there gawping, man,' Logan said. 'Go and get some lime.' [22]

They'd almost finished when Prior shifted his position on the duckboards, glanced down, and found himself staring into an eye.[23] Delicately, like somebody selecting a particularly choice morsel from a plate, he put his thumb and forefinger down through the duckboards. His fingers touched the smooth surface and slid before they managed to get a hold. He got it out, transferred it into the palm of his hand, and held it out towards Logan. He could see his hand was shaking, but the shaking didn't seem to be anything to do with him. 'What am I supposed to do with this gob-stopper?' He saw Logan blink and knew he was afraid. At last Logan reached out, grasped his shaking wrist, and tipped the eye into the bag. 'Williams and me'll do the rest, sir. You go on back now.'

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[16] A humorous detail – why do you think it's been included?
[17] Conditions in the trenches meant men could never get their boots dry. Compare with Hardy in the opening stage directions of Journey's End
[18] All this detail is very reminiscent of Sherriff's opening descriptions – is it deliberate?
[19] The description of conditions fails to come across in a play – prose makes this more immediate and inescapable
[20] Unlike the set of Blackadder and Journey's End, here we see the characters outside the dug-out
[21] The deadpan description is reminiscent of Sassoon's observations in The General
[22] Use of dialogue is sparing. Much more speech needed in a play and – usually – none in poetry
[23] Is this horrific or absurd? Look at the language used: 'choice morsel', 'gobstopper'. Why is Prior's hand shaking? Is this normal? Compare Logan's reactions – is he immune to the horror?

Extract from *Blackadder Goes Forth*, Episode 6 'Goodbyeee'

This YouTube clip has the full extract https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NgyB6lwE8E0&ab_channel=BBCComedyGreatsBBCComedyGreats Definitely worth showing to students. 4 mins 20.

Draw out the fact that novels and poems are able to present us with horror very differently – by getting readers to focus on external descriptions and internalised emotional reactions. Here everything has to be conveyed through tone of voice and visual action.

Darling enters, wearing helmet

George: Sir! *(Salutes)*

Edmund: *(hangs up the phone, turns)* Captain Darling...

Darling: Captain Blackadder.

Edmund: Here to join us for the last waltz?

Darling: *(nervous)* Erm, yes -- tired of folding the general's pyjamas.

George: Well, this is splendid, comradely news! Together, we'll fight for king and country, and be sucking sausages in Berlin by teatime.[24]

Edmund: Yes, I hope their cafes are well stocked; everyone seems determined to eat out the moment they arrive.

George: No, really, this is brave, splendid and noble! Sir?

Edmund: Yes, Lieutenant?

George: I'm scared, sir.

Baldrick: I'm scared too, sir.

George: I mean, I'm the last of the tiddlywinking leapfroggers from the Golden Summer of 1914. I don't want to die. I'm really not overkeen on dying at all, sir.

Edmund: How are you feeling, Darling?

Darling: Erm, not all that good, Blackadder -- rather hoped I'd get through the whole show; go back to work at Pratt & Sons; keep wicket for the Croydon gentlemen; marry Doris... Made a note in my diary on my way here. Simply says, "Bugger."

Edmund: Well, quite.

A voice outside gives orders

Edmund: Ah well, come on. Let's move.

Voice: Fix bayonets!

They start to go outside

Edmund: Don't forget your stick, Lieutenant.[25]

George: Oh no, sir -- wouldn't want to face a machine gun without this!

Outside, they all line up as the shelling stops

Darling: Listen! Our guns have stopped.

George: You don't think...?

[24] Compare later with the character of Raleigh – is George a deliberate exaggeration?
[25] Remember the sword in Birdsong

Baldrick: Maybe the war's over. Maybe it's peace!

George: Well, hurrah! The big knobs have gone round the table and yanked the iron out of the fire!

Darling: Thank God! We lived through it! The Great War: 1914-1917[26].

George: Hip hip!

All but Edmund: Hurray!

Edmund: *(loading his revolver)* I'm afraid not. The guns have stopped because we're about to attack. Not even our generals are mad enough to shell their own men. They think it's far more sporting to let the Germans do it.[27]

George: So we are, in fact, going over. This is, as they say, it.

Edmund: I'm afraid so, unless I think of something very quickly.

Voice: Company, one pace forward!

Everyone steps forward

Baldrick: Ooh, there's a nasty splinter on that ladder, sir! A bloke could hurt himself on that.

Voice: Stand ready!

Everyone puts a foot forward

Baldrick: I have a plan, sir.

Edmund: Really, Baldrick? A cunning and subtle one?

Baldrick: Yes, sir.

Edmund: As cunning as a fox who's just been appointed Professor of Cunning at Oxford University?

Baldrick: Yes, sir.

Voice: On the signal, company will advance!

Edmund: Well, I'm afraid it'll have to wait. Whatever it was, I'm sure it was better than my plan to get out of this by pretending to be mad. I mean, who would have noticed another madman round here?

Whistle blows

Edmund: Good luck, everyone. (blows his whistle)

Everyone yells as they go over the top. German guns fire before they're even off the ladders. The scene changes to slow motion, and explosions happen all around them. [An echoed piano slowly plays the Blackadder theme.] The smoke and flying earth begins to obscure vision as the view changes to the battlefield moments later: empty and silent with barbed wire, guns and bodies strewn across it. [A bass drum beats slowly.] That view in turn changes to the same field as it is today: overgrown with grasses and flowers, peaceful, with chirping birds.

[26] Students should know the dates of WW1!
[27] Link to Sassoon's poem

Additional Reading

There is more to war poetry than mud, wire and slaughter

Andrew Motion

Poems about the first world war have defined the genre for decades. It is time to hear from new voices that reflect a wider view of conflicts

When we say “war poetry” today, the sort of writing that comes to mind is a conglomeration of Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and the other great writers of the first world war. It means descriptions of mud, wire and slaughter on a horrific scale. It includes accusations that the top brass prolonged hostilities for no good reason and that people at home supported the cause in ignorance. It involves fierce protest as well as intense sympathy. It issues a warning.

Because poetry of this sort has been drip-fed into British schools for several generations (interestingly, the process did not start as soon as the war ended, but only began in earnest during the 1960s), it has settled in the public mind at an extraordinary depth. There are large benefits, of course. The best poetry of the first world war is exceptionally powerful – not just the lyrics of Owen and others, but the more complex and modernistic narrative of *In Parenthesis* by David Jones (which still has some claim to be considered a neglected masterpiece). Furthermore, by rubbing its readers’ noses in the brutal facts of conflict and suffering, it possibly creates a social value as well – by helping to educate people in the human cost of war, and in the process discouraging them from starting or supporting another one.

At the same time, maybe there are disadvantages. Perhaps by placing such an emphasis on war poetry in the school curriculum, we don’t actually put people off the idea of fighting, but inculcate the idea that it is somehow normal for the British to take up arms? Perhaps it solidifies the idea of us as a war-like nation? There is a literary consequence to the classroom focus too. By concentrating on the poetry of one conflict, which to an important extent is shaped by its particular circumstances, it directs attention away from the poetry of other wars.

Not just the poetry of other wars, in fact, but other kinds of war poetry. “I am the enemy you killed, my friend,” says the dead soldier encountered in Owen’s “Strange Meeting”: “I parried; but my hands were loath and cold”. This summarises the whole circumstance of first world war poetry: it often involved hand-to-hand fighting; it was intimate. The second world war, by contrast, was for many soldiers a more distanced affair. Keith Douglas when taking aim in his poem “How to Kill”, says: “Now in my dial of glass appears / the soldier who is going to die”. He still thinks of him as a fellow creature (the soldier “moves about in ways / his mother knows, habits of his”) but also feels a crucial separation – a gap that exists as a physical space, and proves the conflict has frozen or exterminated a part of the speaker’s own humanity.

The difference between these two poems is shorthand for the differences between two periods and two kinds of war poetry. It is also an opportunity to point out that while the Owen poem has been read by millions of schoolchildren in the last 50-odd years, the Douglas poem (which is just as good, if not better) has been read by a handful. By not conforming to the pattern of war poetry laid down between 1914 and 1918 (actually between about 1916 and 1918), it has been sidelined.

The point here is not to discredit poetry of the first world war. As a collective act of witness, made at an extraordinary level of technical skill and with equally extraordinary emotional power, it is in its terrible way magnificent. The point, rather, is to say that our definition of “war poetry” has become too narrow to be accurate or fair. By extending it we are not only able to make a large literary gain – by admiring a much wider range of expertise, thoughtfulness and compassion – but also to appreciate in even more varied and detailed ways the effects of war.

This applies to the first world war itself, if we look away from the frontline and move to the home-front poetry of men in uniform such as Edward Thomas, or women waiting for them such as Eleanor Farjeon. Or to the extraordinary reports by nurses and other volunteers such as Helen Mackay, May Wedderburn Cannan and Margaret Postgate Cole. Or to the visceral and proto-existentialist poems and songs and chants of “Anonymous” (“I don’t want a bayonet up my arsehole, / I don’t want my bollocks shot away”).

A glance across the landscape of war poetry written after 1918 gives an even more dramatic sense of variety. The frontline (in north Africa, then France) brilliantly evoked by Douglas – in his poetry as well as his memoir *Alamein to Zem Zem* – is just a part of the large picture in which also appears Alun Lewis writing about soldierly boredom and nervous waiting during the second world war, and Dylan Thomas writing about the blitz

– and, around them, international voices speaking with and through and over them: Nelly Sachs, Paul Celan, Anna Akhmatova and Tadeusz Różewicz.

As we come towards the present day, our sense of dilation becomes even greater. Not just in the sense that poets have made far-flung wars visible at home (Yusef Komunyakaa writing about Vietnam, for instance, or Brian Turner about Iraq), but also because the reporting of wars in the media has encouraged non-combatants to address the subject in greater numbers than ever before. This is a difficult business, since it is all too easy to get caught grandstanding, or parading sensitivities, or seeming to aggrandise oneself by associating with a grand subject. But when it is done well it produces poems that earn the right to sit besides those written by people in uniform: Tony Harrison's "A Cold Coming", for example, or James Fenton's "Dead Soldiers".

Before the first world war, war poetry since time immemorial (*The Iliad*) had been largely concerned to celebrate, commend, remember and, yes, grieve. Think of Lord Byron's Assyrian, coming down like a wolf on the fold, or Sir John Moore in Charles Wolfe's poem about the battle of Corunna. Since 1918, like war itself, the poetry of conflict has become a thing of infinite variety, describing apparently infinite tragedy. Yet for all this – which deserves more acknowledgment than it gets – something has stayed the same. The something Owen meant when he spoke about "the pity".

Introduction to First World War Plays

Mark Rawlinson

The First World War is often recalled as a war of numbers which overwhelm the imagination: 16 million dead, including 6 million excess civilian deaths. 8.7 million men from the British Empire served in the army at some time during 1914-18; nearly a million were killed, died of wounds or were missing – 700,000 of them were from the British Isles. On over 2 million occasions British Army soldiers were wounded and on 64% of these occasions the men were returned to active service to be exposed to more violence. Sixteen thousand men claimed the right to exemption from military service as conscientious objectors to taking part in the killing of people. Three hundred and six British servicemen were executed for cowardice or desertion, for refusing to kill people. (They were pardoned in 2006.) Memorialising the war and its victims was the work of decades. The War Graves Commission was founded in 1917 – its largest memorial, at Theipval, records 72,000 names, and its largest cemetery contains 12,000 graves. By 1972, more than 500 cemeteries on the Western Front were complete and well over 400,000 headstones had been erected.

The war also had a huge literary impact. 2,225 English poets wrote verse about the war of 1914-18. Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet On The Western Front* (1929) sold more than 2 million copies in little over a year. RC Sherriff's play *Journey's End* (1928) played for 2 years but there were 65 other plays written by 1918 and nearly 100 more by 1939.

Theatre of War

The irony of the phrase 'theatre of war' should be obvious. One of the main reasons why 'theatre' and modern war seem so connected is that modern wars are fought by conscripted armies, whose members knew they were only temporarily playing ill-learned parts.

This association became stronger in the 1920s. writing about the impact of *Journey's End* in creating what he called a 'myth of war,' Samuel Hayes wrote

> *Sherriff's play had another quality that guaranteed its success: in his effort to render the reality of the Front, Sherriff had collected the basic elements of the Myth. The characters are the stock figures of the war stories – the brave, hard-drinking commander, the steady second-in-command, the innocent new lieutenant, the coward, the lower-class New Army officer, even the comic servant. The actions too, are familiar – the entrance of the staff officer with the impossible plan of attack, the raid that fails, the death scene. And so are the set speeches – the 'Don't toy think I care?' speech and the "I drink to forget' speech. The historical situation was also, by this time, almost a convention, the last great German offensive, the last British defeat.*

If you think this is an exaggeration, consider the representation of war in Richard Curtis and Ben Elton's scripts for *Blackadder Goes Forth* (1989). Early twentieth century styles of satire and irreverence were matched with

80s 'alternative comedy' but the show also achieved a widely acknowledge pathetic resonance (notably in its series closing end title sequence.) In each aspect, comic and tragic, audience responses were dependent on the currency and reproducibility of Hayes' myth, on familiarity with the themes and archetypes outlined in the quotation above.

Selected chronology of plays about the First World War

1916 – *Night Watches*, Allan Monkhouse

1918 – *My Eyes Have Seen*, Alice Dunbar-Nelson

1924 – *Tunnel Trench*, Hubert Griffith

1928 – *Journey's End*, RC Sherriff

1930 – *Post-Mortem*, Noel Coward

1963 – *Oh, What A Lovely War!*, Joan Littlewood

1981 – *The Accrington Pals*, Peter Whelan

2010 – *Sea and Land and Sky*, Abigail Docherty

Section Two: Journey's End

Key questions	Core knowledge	Terminology & vocabulary	Discussion, reading & writing
Big questions: How would it have felt to be a soldier living and fighting in WW1? **Key questions:** When is *Journey's End* set? What rank are Osborne, Stanhope & Raleigh? What are the key moments in the play?	Key characters: Osborne, Stanhope & Raleigh. What do they each symbolise? The play takes place over 4 days. The constrained timespan, claustrophobic setting, and the feeling of inevitable doom help to create sense of unity. Events in the play do not fit neatly together nor do they lead naturally on to the next. The audience is left not knowing what to think. Rather what Sherriff does is include a number of complications (a twist which is introduced into a play to heighten tension and prolong the climax of the story), moments of drama and an exploration of characters' reactions and relationships, showing the conditions of war. Just as in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (read by Osborne), where nothing makes sense, so this world seems to make no sense itself. Texts: - RC Sheriff, *Journey's End* Page numbers refer to the Heinemann Plays edition. ISBN: 978-0-435232-90-0. ***NB**. This is a short play and can be read in less than 2 hours.* - *Journey's End* context	**Terminology** act symbolism realism Aristotle's unities **Vocabulary** **heroism** **comrade** **regulations** **insubordination**	**Structured discussions**: How do the opening stage directions prepare us for the play? **Couch to 5 k writing**: How are Stanhope and Raleigh used as symbolic characters? Write Osborne or Raleigh's letter home before the raid **Reading fluency**: Parts of the text of *Journey's End* should be read using echo/choral reading to enhance students' understanding of performance & stagecraft

Expert knowledge

The well-made play is a dramatic genre from 19th century theatre, developed by the French dramatist Eugène Scribe. It is characterised by concise plotting, compelling narrative and a largely standardised structure, with little emphasis on characterisation and intellectual ideas. The is some argument about whether *Journey's End* fits this definition.

Because of the play's realism, some critics have accused it of having no structure: "the play is a series of scenes almost unrelated and as difficult to interpret as they would be in real life" (the Times 1929). The apparent disorganised nature of events is a reflection of the chaos of war where things do not follow strict patterns.

Aristotle's dramatic unities are
- the unity of action: a play should have one main action that it follows, with no or few subplots;
- the unity of place: a play should cover a single physical space and should not attempt to compress geography, nor should the stage represent more than one place;
- the unity of time: the action in a play should take place over no more than 24 hours.

Robert Cedric Sherriff was born in 1896 in Hampton Wick, Middlesex. Upon finishing school in 1914, he began working in his father's insurance office, working as a clerk until World War I. Sherriff served in the East Surrey Regiment, fighting in several notable battles until he was finally injured in 1917. At this point, he returned to his original line of work, acting as an insurance adjuster for ten years. During this period, he began to write plays, drawing upon his wartime experiences in works like *Journey's End*, his most famous and celebrated artistic effort. First produced in 1928, *Journey's End* attracted widespread critical acclaim and enjoyed a long run in London. After this success, Sherriff attended New College, Oxford in the early thirties, where he was part of the Royal Society of Literature and the Society of Antiquaries of London. During his lifetime, he composed eighteen original plays, wrote fifteen film scripts, and even published several novels.

Suggested teaching sequence

Lesson 1
Recap:
- Use the word 'incompetent' in a sentence.
- What is a patriot?
- Change courage to make it an adjective.
- What type of word is 'despite'?
- Who is Wilfred Owen?

Teach:
- Teach the word 'comrade'
- Read opening stage directions – briefly introduce setting of Saint Quentin. Note the date: Evening on Monday, 18th March 1918.
- Focussing on character and plot: read (ideally perform) the act (p 1-31)
- Draw attention to staging: all the action takes place in the officer's dugout – we never see outside into the trench although we hear the sounds of war off stage. This makes the setting more claustrophobic and tense.

Check understanding:
- Intersperse with clarification questions and discussion but don't begin analysing scenes until the play is completed. The following prompts might help guide discussions:

- Describe both Hardy and Osborne in three words.
- What do Hardy and Osborne reveal about Stanhope? (5-6)
- Why do you think Sherriff introduces the character of Raleigh?
- What else do we learn about Stanhope from Raleigh? (11-12)
- Why do we hear so much about Stanhope before his entrance on p 17?
- How is Trotter different to the other officers?
- What is Mason's role in the play?

Lesson 2
Recap:
- What rank is Stanhope?
- What is Osborne's nickname?
- How does Raleigh know Stanhope?
- What does the verb 'glorify' mean?
- What is a thesis statement?

Teach:
- Teach the word 'heroism'
- Read Act 2 scene 1 (32-48)

Check understanding:
The following prompts might help guide discussions:
- Why does Act 2 begin with a conversation between Trotter and Mason?
- What are your thoughts about the character of Osborne? What is his role in the play?

- Discuss vocab like 'Boche' (Germans) and phosgene (poison gas) whizz-bangs (an artillery shell) Wipers (Ypres)
- What do you notice about the way most of the officers speak? (Cheero, topping rather)
- What's causing the tension between Raleigh & Stanhope?
- What do we learn in the incident of the letter? What is Stanhope afraid of?

Lesson 3

Recap:

- Change heroism to make it an adjective
- What does camaraderie mean?
- Suggest three words to describe Stanhope
- What does the verb 'glorify' mean?
- What is a subordinate clause?

Teach:

- Teach the word 'insubordination'
- Read Act 2 scene 2 (33-65)

Check understanding:

The following prompts might help guide discussions:

- Explain the purpose of non-commissioned officers and the sergeant major's role in the army. Highlight the disparity in Stanhope's and the SM's ages.
- Contrast with the Colonel – what is his purpose in visiting the trenches? How is life different at Head Quarters?
- Why is Stanhope so angry with Hibbert? Note the language he uses 'worm', 'swine')
- Why does Stanhope change his attitude towards Hibbert?
- What's the significance of Osborne reading Alice's Adventures in Wonderland?
- How do Raleigh and Osborne feel about the raid? How do you think Stanhope feels?

Lesson 4

Recap:

- Change comrade to make it an adjective
- What are Aristotle's unities?
- Suggest three words to describe Osborne
- Where is the play set?
- What is symbolism?

Teach:

- Teach the word 'regulations'
- Read Act 3 scene 1 (66-103)

Check understanding:

The following prompts might help guide discussions in A3 s1: (66-80)

- How do you think Stanhope feels towards the Colonel?
- How do you think Osborne feels about being recommended for an M.C.? Compare to Raleigh.
- How does Sherriff build tension? Why does Osborne keep changing the subject?

- What do we learn about Osborne?
- What's the effect of the raid happening off stage?
- Compare the Colonel's treatment of the German prisoner with that of his own men.

The following prompts might help guide discussions in A3 s2: (80-91)
- Why doesn't Raleigh join in the celebrations?
- What are we supposed to think of Hibbert's behaviour?
- Why is Stanhope upset that Raleigh shares his rations with the men? Why does he call him a "bloody little swine"?

The following prompts might help guide discussions in A3 s3: (92-101)
- Compare Mason and Hibbert's feelings about 'standing to'
- Why does Stanhope remain in the dug-out?
- Note Stanhope calls Raleigh 'Jimmy'
- What has changed? What do you think happens at the end?

Annotated copies of texts from students' workbook

***Journey's End* - Opening stage directions**

A dug-out in the British trenches before St Quentin. A few rough steps into the trench above, through a low doorway. A table occupies a good space of the dug-out floor. A wooden frame, covered with wire netting, stands against the left wall and serves the double purpose of a bed and a seat for the table. A wooden bench against the back wall makes another seat, and two boxes serve for other sides. Another wire-covered bed is fixed to the right corner beyond the doorway.[28]

Gloomy tunnels lead out of the dug-out to left and right. Except for the table, beds, and seats, there is no furniture save the bottles holding the candles., and a few tattered magazine pictures pinned to the wall of girls in flimsy costumes.

The earth walls deaden the sounds of war, making them faint and far away, although the front line is only fifty yards ahead. The flames of the candles that burn day and night are steady in the still, damp air.

The evening of a March day. A pale glimmer of moonlight shines down the narrow steps into one corner of the dugout. Warm yellow candle flames light the other corner from the necks of two bottles on the table. Through the doorway can be seen the misty grey parapet of a trench and a narrow strip of starlit sky. A bottle of whisky, a jar of water, and a mug stand on the table amongst a litter of papers and magazines. An officer's equipment hangs in a jumbled mass from a nail in the wall.

CAPTAIN HARDY, a red-faced, cheerful-looking man, is sitting on a box by the table, intently drying a sock over a candle flame. He wears a heavy trench-boot on his left leg, and his right foot, which is naked, is held above the damp floor by resting it on his right knee.[29] *His right boot stands on the floor beside him. As he carefully turns the sock this way and that – feeling it against his face to see if it is dry – he half sings, half hums a song – humming when he is not quite sure of the words, and marking time with the toes of his right foot*

Structured discussion

- What is your impression of the description of the dug-out? What do you think it might be like to live there?
- What does this suggest about the story to follow?
- Does this seem like an accurate reflection of the realities of war?

[28] Compare to the description of the dug-out in the Regeneration extract. Is it similar to the set design in Blackadder?

[29] Hardy's boots are wet. What does this tell us about conditions in the trenches?

RC Sheriff, *Journey's End*

Robert Cedric Sherriff (1896-1975) served in the First World War as a Captain in the 9th East Surrey Regiment. He was wounded at Passchendaele in 1917 and awarded the Military Cross. Before and after the war Sherriff had worked as an insurance salesman and had no previous experience of the professional theatre. The immense success of *Journey's End* (which opened in London's West End early in 1929) changed his life for ever. Sherriff had originally planned a novel about the lives of two young men called Dennis Stanhope and Jimmy Raleigh, but he made slow progress at it. When he decided to reshape the idea as a play with a First World War setting, he found that all his problems were instantly solved, both in terms of setting and characterisation:

> *I had lived in those murky underground caverns* [the trenches] *for so many months that I knew them as well as the room I was working in ... for the first time I was writing about something real, about men I had lived with and knew so well that every line they spoke came straight from them and not from me. I had lived through it all.*[30]

Even so, the play's success took Sherriff by surprise. Plays about the recent war had appeared on the London stage and had generally proved failures. Sherriff himself attributed this to the fact that these plays had generally had a more political angle. Journey's End was

> *… the first war play that kept its feet in the Flanders mud. What they* [the public] *had never been shown before on the stage was how men really lived in the trenches, how they talked and how they behaved. Old soldiers recognised themselves...Women recognised their sons, their brothers, or their husbands, many of whom had not returned. They were simple, unquestioning men who fought the war because it seemed the only right and proper thing to do. Somebody had got to fight it, and they had accepted the misery and suffering without complaint.*

Sherriff's comment that his characters were 'simple' and 'unquestioning' men is reminiscent of Wilfred Owen's declaration in the preface to his poems that his book 'was not about heroes'.[31] Owen witnessed a great many of the same kind of horrors that Sherriff did, but the two authors' responses to them are very different. The anger, frustration and sense of tragic injustice which characterise Owen's work are harder to find in Sherriff's.[32] One of the most notable aspects of Sherriff's play, which undoubtedly contributed to its success, was its refusal to comment or take up a position. The play's characters speak for themselves and we have to make up our own minds.

[30] Is this reflected in his set description? Is this copied by later writers?
[31] What is heroism? This is a question that will be returned to later and it will be useful to link back to this
[32] Stanhope's reaction after Osborne is killed is a good example of Sherriff's anger and frustration leaking out

Additional reading

The well-made play and the play made well, Maddy Costa

https://www.writeaplay.co.uk/the-well-made-play-and-the-play-made-well-by-maddy-costa/

"Not long ago I was talking with a group of young British dramatists about the theatre and play-writing in general. The term 'well-made play' came up, as it will, in a derogatory sense, and suddenly one of them said, 'Come to think of it, why shouldn't a play be well-made? What's wrong with that?' What indeed. And yet the phrase, which seems obviously designed as a compliment, is almost invariably used in modern criticism as an insult."

So wrote John Russell Taylor in the introduction to his book The Rise & Fall of the Well-Made Play, neatly encapsulating a 21st-century concern, despite looking no further ahead than 1967, the year his book was published. Such a lot has changed in the intervening five decades, not only in terms of how theatre is created, but in the kinds of participatory relationships it seeks to have with its audience. And yet plays continue to be written – or wrought – by individual playwrights, and as long as they do this phrase "well-made" lingers in the background. It's a provocation in the sense of taunt, in that even Michael Billington, the critic mostly likely to use the words "well-made play" with admiration, accepts that there is something "dirty" about the phrase, suggestive of a "dated, 19th-century formula". But it's also a provocation in the sense of stimulus or inspiration: because after all, what is anyone going to the theatre for except to see a play – or, to cast the net wider, a performance or production – that is at the very minimum made well?

Perhaps, before that question can be answered, I ought to do as Taylor did, and find out what the well-made play is. But rather than re-rehearse the arguments set out in his book, which examines in detail the work of British playwrights from the 1870s to the 1950s, I spoke to 12 people working in theatre today, as playwrights, directors, dramaturgs, critics and producers, and put the question to them. Fascinatingly, the answers reveal that while the phrase connotes one thing, culturally and critically, for many theatre-makers it potentially means something quite different.

First, the connotations. Vicky Featherstone, artistic director of the Royal Court, declares the well-made play a relic of the past: "a very particular form of storytelling that no new play subscribes to now at all". In describing that form, she thinks of Ibsen and Chekhov, "protracted narrative development" and "a maid coming on for two scenes". What we have now is "the grandchild of the well-made play: conventional narrative drama where we tell a story from A to B, where we meet the characters and follow their story, which we have empathy for".

Dawn Walton, founder and artistic director of the theatre company Eclipse, skips the bit about family relations but also describes the well-made play in terms of "a specific structure, usually three acts, with a particular arc: there is a problem, this thing affects everything, it plateaus up, and there's a fall-off, a coda, at the end". This is exactly the structure that playwright Ella Hickson teaches aspiring playwrights: "You have your rising action, you have a moment of change, and then you have your falling action where you demonstrate how that change is lived out in the world". Director Kirsty Housley adds flesh to the idea: the well-made play also has "a fourth wall, lots of people in costumes pretending to be someone

they're not, and no acknowledgement of reality", descriptions that might seem quite innocuous without Housley's dismissive tone of voice to slant them towards disparagement.

This is the interesting thing about what the words "well-made play" connote: there's nothing intrinsically wrong with drama that adheres to certain structural guidelines, the issue is where it impacts with taste. Or is it really that innocent? For Housley the problem of the well-made play lies in the notion of "neutrality" inherent in what it presents as "naturalism and realism" – which isn't in fact, natural or realistic at all, because "if you wrote a play the way people talk it would be really dull". She sees "an idea of purity in the well-made play which is dangerous: there's a right way of doing things and if you do it differently you're either wild or wrong".

As assistant artistic director at the Royal Shakespeare Company, Erica Whyman rarely works with plays from the well-made heyday: instead her focus is on the Elizabethan and Jacobean drama that amply preceded it, and the contemporary or new writing that followed it: plays, she says cheerfully, that might be deemed to "misbehave". She sees "a positive and a negative connotation" in the well-made play: "The positive version is that they don't have too many people, so you can make a strong connection to the characters, and they're robust pieces of writing, so as a director or an actor you can make them work by listening to them well. Where I find it a stifling idea is that it becomes a huge long list of what makes plays work: has it got a beginning, middle and end? Who is the protagonist I'm meant to care about the most? What is the inciting incident?" She compares this to the ways in which Elizabethan dramatists, including Shakespeare, "sprawl between styles, muck around with who we care about, explode the space-time rules" – that is, the unities of time and place advocated by Aristotle. "Most literary managers", Whyman notes, "wouldn't allow Elizabethan plays to be written now: and if they did, they wouldn't get programmed."

Ay, there's the rub, to quote Hamlet, decidedly not a well-made play. The phrase doesn't merely connote a set of structural interests but what Walton calls "establishment" thinking that is "quite male, and very middle-class". She's aware this is a generalisation but also speaks from direct experience of the ways in which "the well-made play can be quite exclusive, or will exclude extraordinary things", and in particular how it "has been one of the greatest barriers to Black writing". She recalls attending script meetings at the Royal Court in the late-1990s and realising that the texts to which she had a "visceral and emotional" response invariably struck her colleagues as underdeveloped; Black writing has more chance of being programmed, she's found, through staged readings rather than script meetings. Housley, who often works collaboratively, and with technologies ranging from live video to binaural sound to Whatsapp, also sees the bias in an industry where the fate of a new play "depends on someone reading it and thinking it's good – not seeing it and thinking it's good. Our new writing culture is so language-driven," she says, the phrase "new writing" itself telling in its application to a medium so dynamic visually and physically.

Hickson wonders whether there might even be "a corollary between how we run buildings, how we put plays on, and what shape the plays are": a mirroring or looping effect, whereby one hierarchical system informs another. She takes the "political" perspective that "form is related to cultural structures: how we tell stories is how we organise societies to a certain extent. The well-made play usually comes from a slightly uninterrogated hegemonic middle, and has been a patriarchal construct for a very long time: there's a man at the centre doing

things to make that man feel powerful and domineering. It's a singular character in pursuit of a desire and something is stopping him getting that desire: that is capitalist."

Whyman agrees that "the form itself has become associated with a kind of masculine sense of success. Well-made plays have a masculine heritage and a very strong, often paternalistic masculine voice: I'm not talking about the author but the way they work internally. A Doll's House and Hedda Gabler have these extraordinary female protagonists – but the agents for most of the length of those plays are the men." Both Hickson and Whyman are careful to acknowledge the "risk", as Whyman puts it, "that what we're heard to be saying is the way that certain men write plays is no good" when the issue isn't individuals but societal superstructures. Hickson points to the "brilliant experimental men" from whom she learned a different approach to the wroughting of plays, including David Greig and Simon Stephens. This isn't about gender: it's about systems of power.

Playwright Vinay Patel – who finds the well-made play "formally quite conservative", with a "slickness that disguises a lot of humanity" – is so suspicious of the hegemonic narrative structure he wrote an MA about how "fragmented narratives are more truthful to a global society". But he also admits feeling suspicious about his own sense of comfort and predictability when faced with the "warm familiar bath" of the well-made play. "I try to check myself and ask, am I bored by it or do I find it unsatisfying because I've seen under the hood of it and know the machinations going on there? As someone who really loves audiences and wants to put stories that are accessible in front of people, I wonder if I'm just being a bit pretentious."

Louise Stephens, dramaturg at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, shares that concern. She connects the "natural and satisfying journey" presented to an audience by the well-made play to the structures of storytelling embedded in humans as children, "before you can read or process words". This is what makes the well-made play "incredibly seductive", suggests Featherstone: "conventional narrative structure is in our DNA". As such, she's inclined to believe it's also "democratic: you don't need to learn it to be able to write, because it's how you tell stories". But both Stephens and Featherstone agree that these are also Western structures, making Stephens "fascinated by the ways in which that might be different in different places".

Conventional western storytelling is also, argues Patel, a hallmark of cinema and television. In fact, when playwright Lucy Prebble thinks about the well-made play, her mind goes immediately to "a time before screen was as ubiquitous as it is now. Naturalism and a sense of heavy structure are things that I associate with movies, and that medium probably does both better." Patel actually came to the stage from the screen, and wonders why so much theatre doesn't "think more theatrically. Why does this have to be a play? What is it about this as a thing to sit with in time and space?" Faced with a lot of issues-based drama, Featherstone asks another question: "What's the difference that turns something into a piece of theatre, that could be told better in a documentary or a really good news article?" Or, as Emily McLaughlin, head of the New Work department at the National Theatre, puts it: "What can you detonate as a playwright, in a way that can only happen on a stage, in front of a live audience?"

Patel and Featherstone's questions, and McLaughlin's use of the word "detonate", shoot with the force of a cannonball to the deepest roots of the well-made play: or at least, to the definition that emerges from Taylor's book, particularly where he writes about the French dramatist Eugène Scribe, who constructed the formula of the "pièce bien faite" out of a recognition that "all drama, in performance, is an experience in time, and that therefore the first essential is to keep one's audience attentive from one minute to the next". Tom Robertson, the Victorian dramatist who adopted Scribe's blueprint for the British stage, modified it to focus on middle-class life – but shared absolutely Scribe's concern for "the art of telling a story in dramatic terms".

As a description of the well-made play, that is so much more open and flexible than a list of structural edicts. And this returns us to the difference between what the phrase connotes to today's theatre-makers, and what making plays or theatre well might actually mean to them. "It's about the relationship between thesis and form," says Hickson. "It's about making sure, whatever your intention is, that your form is active in relation to that intention: that what you're saying and how you're saying it are in quite an interrogated relationship."

In terms of critical paradigms, says Duska Radosavljevic, thinking about the intention of the artist can seem "outdated or problematic". And yet, in her own work as a critic and dramaturg, that is precisely where her interest lies: "When I work as a dramaturg, I understand my job is to serve the artist's intention in some way." To witness this process in her critical work, it's worth looking up her review for Exeunt of Alistair McDowall's X, a play that bamboozled many who saw it. Also an academic, Radosavljevic wrote the book Theatre-Making: Interplay Between Text and Performance in the 21st Century to make an argument for the panoply of approaches to making theatre well that sit outside the boundaries of the well-made play, focusing in particular on forms that "engage the audience in a process of participation, because ultimately it is always about the relationship between the work and the audience for me".

A play that doesn't adhere to well-made structures might not look familiar, says Patel, but that participatory impulse, or understanding of why it is on stage and not on screen, "teaches me how to watch it, and has an internal logic to it. You can feel like the person or people who've created it know why they're doing it, and are trying to find a different language to express it." He points to debbie tucker green's ear for eye: its triptych structure replaces the classic three acts with scenes that zoom out from the personal to the political superstructure, then zoom out again to connect the present to the past. Even encountering such a play on paper, says Hickson, a reader should be able to "feel the structure in a muscular way". That's the "visceral and emotional" response that Walton talks about.

Ellen McDougall, artistic director at the Gate theatre in London, says she doesn't use the term "well-made play" itself, but when she thinks about theatre that is made well, "what I respond to is an offer, a really clear offer from a writer. That might mean that there are character arcs and a fully realised naturalistic world, or it might mean a set of questions for a director to respond to. It might not prescribe exactly what happens on the stage, but its argument or its exploration or its perspective would be clear and fully investigated." While the conventional well-made play would most likely be linear, theatre made well might offer "a kind of resistance to that, while still having an idea of progression over time". She's drawn, for instance, to the circular or repetitive, texts that "ask an audience to look again

and again at something that might seem familiar, but perhaps if we look at it more closely or differently or again it will reveal something else".

Featherstone uses some of the same language when she describes the plays that excite her: "They are offers for audience, for performance." That offer can be hard to recognise on paper, she admits, "because often the work can be quite subliminal: you have to commit to it in order to understand it". Not that she prioritises understanding: if anything, she's drawn to the work she doesn't understand immediately, wanting to feel "surprised, and smaller than the thing I'm reading". Effectively she wants to be challenged – and that's why she thinks there's no such thing as a well-made play, in Scribe and Robertson's understanding of the term, today. The well-made play in its historical period, from the beginning of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th, set out to disrupt its audience and easily could, simply by showing the characters, particularly the female characters, transgressing codes of conduct that both expressed and defined morality in that time. "No story told in that form will ever disrupt an audience in the same way now," Featherstone argues. "Even when the subject matter is something shameful to civic society, or challenging in some way, the conventional structure makes it feel safe. Now what disrupts us is form: we don't know where something which plays with form is heading, so it unsettles us."

There is, Whyman points out, "a long and very strong tradition in this country of playful, non-linear, formal experimentation in writing, but it doesn't quite carry the authority of the plays that we might still describe as well-made." This is why Stephens wants to avoid using the phrase as "a value judgement rather than an analytical tool": she wants to leave as much space open as possible for innovation. A key question for her throughout her career has been: "Where might the writers of the future take us, and have we got the tools to spot the different things they might do with the form – as well as recognising and holding the ways in which they might inhabit and reinvigorate those existing forms?" McLaughlin points to Natasha Gordon's Nine Night as an instance of that reinvigoration: it might not be radical in form, but "at the heart of it is a voice that is not heard enough at the National", and that's what makes it progressive.

Essentially McLaughlin's viewpoint is one that synthesises traditional and modern views on the well-made play. On the one hand, she argues that "architecture defines form defines content defines story", and just as the Victorian well-made play was designed for the proscenium-arch theatre, so the vast space of the Olivier needs a big protagonist and a public address, whereas a smaller room that might more successfully hold a fragmentary narrative. (I'm not sure I agree with this, but that's an argument for another day.) But she also has come to feel that the phrase "well-made play certainly does not mean any of those things I originally learned in education about structure. It means a compelling story told with the right form: it means content matches the form, whatever that looks like."

In the work of poet and playwright Inua Ellams, that can look like anything from extended poetic monologue (The 14th Tale) to globe-spanning interactions between men and their barbers (Barbershop Chronicles). And yet, Ellams sees himself as "very traditional", focused on the basic questions of "who do I care about, why am I supposed to care about them, and what difficulties do they go through?" For him the well-made play is a tool at his service, and not vice versa. Or, to switch metaphor abruptly, the question he asks himself is: "How can I

make this glove fit my hand? As opposed to: this is a shiny glove, I'm going to write a play that fits it."

Even though she pushes against the structures and strictures of well-made playwriting, Walton agrees that the "the rules are not invalid. If there's not subtext in writing it's boring frankly; if dialogue is not about making character, it's dull. So there are skills and techniques and craft – wroughting – that need to happen." But she wants that to happen alongside "an understanding that text is broader than just words": that the text of a play is also its movement, its lighting, its design, the dramaturgy of performance and production. Hickson shares Walton's interest in the collective and collaborative, but agrees that "there are some things that don't change. You need a central protagonist – I have yet to see the truly choral play that works – that person needs to be in pursuit of something, and some things need to be stopping that person getting what they want. That crisis creates change, and that change tells us something about humanity. That is true of Romeo and Juliet and it's true of Caryl Churchill's Far Away: your form can be something else, but that principle has to be there." Or, as Stephens neatly summarises, the "established narrative tropes" remain essential, because "you couldn't invert it if it didn't exist".

What might need to change, however, is the language used to talk about plays. "We probably need to find a better term for the plays that feel conventional and safe to us," suggests Featherstone. Or, says Whyman, we need "a new vocabulary to talk about the architecture of someone's play, or the rigour of it, but also the deft turns of focus which you particularly need if you're asking an audience to move in directions they weren't expecting. That is a skill and a craft I'm not sure we know how to talk about." At the same time, Whyman believes the process of developing work needs to change, because: "the whole way we decide whether a play is ready for the stage is out of date and unhelpful. It's a great tool that you can send someone a play and they say this is brilliant, we should do it: but if they can't discern what you think is brilliant, you need another way of speaking about it." Perhaps then we'll reach the stage when the phrase well-made play, as Stephens says, is nothing more nor less than "one that's made well – and that could look like absolutely anything".

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In his autobiography "No Leading Lady" R.C. Sherriff wrote that he tried to show his audiences 'how men really lived in the trenches'. The play was a tribute to the many men who 'had not returned'.

Mud, trenches, rats, the endless waiting and eerie quiet all contribute to the image of war that would be familiar to many 'not a sound or a soul … yet you knew thousands of guns were hidden there … thousands of Germans were waiting and thinking'. They would also understand it when soldiers like Stanhope and Osborne are seen having to follow orders, unable to disobey their commanding officers or change events.

The audience would have recognised Raleigh's youthful enthusiasm and Stanhope's hardened cynicism as typical reactions to the war. (We have to keep reminding ourselves that Stanhope is only three years older than Raleigh.)

Raleigh arrives with certain idealistic expectations about war. Osborne tries to preserve this image for him. He tells him: 'Think of it all as romantic. It helps.' Raleigh sees his being chosen for the raid as an honour: 'I say – it's most frightfully exciting!' Yet the raid changes him, as he begins to see what war is really like. It does not, however, stop him from doing his duty.

The men are presented as worthy characters whose lives are sacrificed for no reasonably justifiable cause. In the raid, seven men die and little information of any worth is extracted from the German prisoner. When Osborne and Stanhope talk of worms going the wrong way, Stanhope uses the conversation as a metaphor for the men's feelings of hopelessness and futility. Just as in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (quoted by Osborne), where nothing makes sense, so this world seems to make no sense itself.

Form, structure and language in Journey's End

BBC Bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z8kky4j/revision/5

Form

The form of a text is the type of text you are reading or watching. The form of *Journey's End* is a dramatic play, which means the text we study is the script used by actors and directors to perform the play in front of an audience.

Journey's End is a realist or naturalistic drama. This is shown immediately in Sherriff's detailed opening stage directions in which the setting is made to mimic real life. For example, in the first act the stage directions note the gloominess of the dugout but add that there are "a few tattered magazine pictures pinned to the wall of girls in flimsy costumes."

The realistic setting lets us know immediately where we are. It reflects the horrors of war while showing how the men tried to make their surroundings homely or personal. This gives the play verisimilitude[33].

This kind of naturalistic drama began to be popular around the beginning of the 20th Century. It attracted audiences who would previously have felt that theatre was too 'high-brow'. *Journey's End* appealed to people from every walk of life. Winston Churchill - who went on to be the British prime minister during World War Two - was reportedly a fan of the play.

The structure of Journey's End

The structure of a text refers to the way in which events are organised inside the play as a whole.

The events of this play are organised into three acts, but take place over four days. Act I contains one scene, Act II contains two scenes and Act III contains three scenes. The scenes therefore get shorter as the play moves on. This quickens the pace as we move towards the end, and tension rises in the dugout while the men wait for the oncoming attack.

Act I is an exposition scene, allowing us to understand the situation and to become familiar with the characters and their relationships with each other. There is a lot of boredom and sitting around chatting. This portrays how much waiting there was in war, and creates tension as the audience are waiting for something to happen.

An imminent attack - expected in two days' time - is mentioned in Act II, Scene 1. This introduces tension, but again the audience are left waiting. There is no more war action until Act II, Scene 2, when the Colonel comes to inform Stanhope which officers will be involved in the planned raid on the German forces. Again this is drawn out, and there is no sign of any actual fighting in Act II. The act ends poignantly with the young Raleigh excited and flattered about being picked to take part in the raid.

[33] Something that appears real and believable, has the appearance of reality

The pace of the action steps up in Act III, Scene 1. It begins slowly, with the men eating - but by the end of the scene the raid is over and Osborne is dead.

The remaining short scenes see Stanhope left cynical by the lack of care from his superiors about the loss of men. The play finally ends with the death of Raleigh, and the remaining characters going forth to the attack they have been waiting for since Act II.

This conclusion reinforces the futility of war as all the characters we have gotten to know during the play are now dead or - we assume - about to die.

The use of language in Journey's End

Stage set

The language used to describe the set creates atmosphere immediately. There is little in the way of home comforts and the darkness is reinforced through “The flames of the candles that burn day and night are steady in the still, damp air.” There is no natural light as the stage is set in a dugout under the ground. This is also shown in the description, “Gloomy tunnels lead out of the dugout to left and right.” This claustrophobic setting conveys the horrors of life for soldiers at war. The description of “earth walls” which “deaden the sounds of war” shows how men had little comfort in the trenches and were surrounded by violence and death at all times.

Dialogue

As this is a realist play, the men’s dialogue varies according to their position and social class. This shows the hierarchy in the military, but also how people from every social class were heroes in the face of adversity.

Stanhope, Osborne and Raleigh all mention that they were public schoolboys and this is reflected in their use of Standard English and words like “rugger” and “chaps”. At the beginning of World War One, only men educated at public school could become officers. But it was around this time that the class system became less regimented - possibly because so many privately educated officers died. It wasn’t long after the war began that men who did not go to public school could get promoted.

In *Journey’s End* we see that Trotter is an officer. Yet his use of the vernacular - “I know a decent bit o’ pudden when I see it” - shows him to be less well educated. This is Sherriff reflecting the changing times.

Look also at the dialogue of the Colonel and Mason - both from very different classes - to see examples of these variations.

References to life outside the trenches

While the play is set over four days leading up to the final attack, the past is still important. This is shown by the discussions the men have about their lives outside the war. Trotter’s description of his garden “with flower-borders – geraniums, lobelia, and calceolaria”, and Osborne’s revelation that he played rugby for England humanise these characters. We are

reminded that every soldier was a real man with a life, just like the rest of us. References to Stanhope's fiancé and Osborne's wife also remind us of how many people back home suffered from the war - women and children lost fathers and loved ones.

It is particularly poignant when Osborne removes his wedding ring because he doesn't "want the risk of losing it." We suspect the truth is that he does not expect to survive and wants the ring to be given to his wife when he dies.

Stage directions

The stage directions are the part of the script - often in brackets or italics - that tell the actors how they are to move or speak their lines. While they do not form the dialogue of the play, they are obviously important as they tell us what the writer intended us to observe on stage.

However, there are times where the stage directions use language which is significant for a reader as well as an audience – note how the word "boy" is repeated in the stage directions as Raleigh is dying, and how the simile "like a child" is used to describe how the Sergeant Major carries him. These linguistic devices emphasise how young Raleigh is, reinforcing the futility of a war that kills so many young men with so much potential.

Sound effects

The stage directions refer frequently to the noises heard from outside the dugout. This means that even in the seemingly calm moments on stage, we are always aware there is a war going on.

Sherriff uses onomatopoeia at times, describing the sounds vividly. For example, the "sharp crack" of grenades and the shells that "whistle and hiss and moan". The opening stage directions describe the "sounds of war" as "faint and far away". This is in contrast to the final shelling, which "has risen to a great fury" and is described using words and phrases such as "shriek" and "fevered spatter". The threatening but distant sounds of war shown at the beginning become a close reality at the end.

The use of silence

As well as dialogue and sound effects, Sherriff also uses the lack of these for impact. The stage directions in Act II, Scene 3 - during the tense dialogue between Stanhope and Hibbert - refer repeatedly to "silence". This emphasises the awkwardness of the situation and - at times - Stanhope's calm leadership skills. At other times - during Raleigh's death scene for example - silence is used to allow the audience to take in and reflect on the tragedy of the situation.

Foreshadowing

Sherriff gives many hints throughout the play as to what is to come. Before the play even begins, the title itself foreshadows that these men may be coming to the end of something. Stanhope and Osborne's discussion about the shame of men who go home when they are

not really sick, foreshadows the tense situation between Hibbert and Stanhope later on in the play.

In Act II, Scene 1 their conversation about “the worms wandering about round the stones and roots of trees” may be an ominous foreshadowing of the death and decay that will come to many of the characters. Also, when Osborne takes off his wedding ring before he goes on the raid this hints that he may not be going to return.

All of these things increase tension and introduce the theme of danger and death early in the play.

Juxtaposition

Sherriff juxtaposes scenes of eating and chatting with scenes of discussions about battle and violence. This has the effect of reminding us that these are human beings. We often talk of war and the vast numbers of men who died without really considering that each of those lives belonged to people just like us or our loved ones.

Seeing the men concerned about what is for breakfast, discussing gardening and sports, and being nervous and scared before going into battle removes the glamour and heroism sometimes associated with fighting for one’s country in the propaganda of the time. It also belied the jingoistic works of poets like Jessie Pope.

A conversation between Raleigh and Osborne in Act III, Scene 1 shows this method of juxtaposition well:

Osborne: D’you like coffee better than tea?

Raleigh: I do for breakfast. [Pause.] Do these smoke bombs make much row when they burst?

Osborne: Not much. [Pause.] Personally, I like cocoa for breakfast.

Mundane topics like beverage preferences are discussed alongside dangerous weapons. This shows how the men have become so accustomed to danger and violence that it is just an everyday feature of their lives.

Dramatic irony

Dramatic irony is created when the audience knows something about the situation that another character doesn’t know.

In this play there are many examples, but the most striking is when Hibbert complains to Stanhope of his "neuralgia". The audience is already half aware of what Stanhope’s response will be because he has talked of his disapproval of such a tactic before.

Contrast

Sherriff uses contrasts to guide the audience's response to characters and actions. As discussed, there are contrasts in language and stage directions at the beginning of the play and at the end.

The characters themselves are contrasted to emphasise certain physical or personality traits. For example, when the tall and slim Stanhope first appears on set he is with chubby red-faced Trotter. This emphasises the heroic physical attributes of Stanhope and helps us to understand the boyish love Raleigh has for him.

Hibbert's desire to leave - and his pretence at illness to escape - is contrasted with the character of Stanhope who has "never had a rest" according to Osborne. The contrast in Trotter's addiction to food with Stanhope's addiction to alcohol is used to show how everyone uses crutches to deal with the horrors of war. They may choose different things to help them cope, but in the end everyone finds their own way of "breaking the strain".

Journey's end – the classic war play explored, Robert Gore-Langton
Book review by Dominic Cavendish

Although it was fought by air and sea too, it's the land war we tend to picture first when our thoughts turn to the First World War and above all of course the Western Front and the Trenches. Remarkably in the decades since the end of the conflict only one conventional play has evoked that man-made nightmare for its audience and endured: *Journey's End* by RC Sherriff, an insurance clerk from Hampton Wick who enlisted in late 1915 aged 19 and lived to tell the tale.

It might seem obvious to provide a detailed account of the wartime experiences that Sherriff drew on and the impact and influence of his play: half a million saw it in the West End following its 1928 premiere and within a year of opening it had been performed by 76 companies in 25 languages, including Japanese and German. Yet it's only with this new book by Robert Gore-Langton, a well-established theatre critic who reviewed for the Telegraph back in the 1990s, that the story has finally been properly unearthed and presented for the benefit of the wider public.

Gore-Langton supplies enough information to satisfy the theatrical connoisseur and be of use to school-pupils mugging up on this syllabus staple. But by retracing the journey Sherriff went on before he produced his epitaph for the lost generation he provides an illuminating route into the vast subject of the Great War itself. Furthermore the way in which he assesses the complex legacy of the play – it was sometimes derided and for a while fell out of favour, "Missing presumed dull" Gore-Langton quips – contributes to the big debate as to how we should consider the conflict that rumbles on right up to this minute.

Is this "well-made" three-act drama, set entirely in an officers' dug-out in the trenches at Saint-Quentin, Aisne, over a four-day period running up to the big Boche offensive of March 21 1918, too sanitised and jingoistic to deserve its classic status? Evincing displays of blood and tears, it has had a good deal of mud flung at it. The director Joan Littlewood despised it – flew into a fury at the mere mention of it, we're told. She devised the satirical vaudevillian entertainment *Oh, What A Lovely War!*, which premiered in 1963, as a riposte to its straightforward heroics, ranging far from the Lines and realism and making much play of statistics and songs.

True, in its portrait of the officer class – at the centre of which stands the nerve-wracked, whisky-dependent Captain Stanhope, *Journey's End* goes little further than showing a bunch of decent young chaps facing unbearable pressure, lions not donkeys. But its lasting power, Gore-Langton rightly argues, lies in its ambiguity and understatement. The play doesn't invite us to approve military tactics or mourn one character over another. It was hailed by some as a "noble war play" and promoted by its strike-it-lucky producer as a pacifist statement but its author, a former grammar-school boy who remained unspoiled by his success and a bachelor until his death in 1975, was quietly adamant: "It is simply the expression of a kind of ideal. I wanted to perpetuate the memory of some of those men."

When he joined the 9th Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment (C Company) there was no thought of theatre in the head of Robert Cedric Sherriff. He still had that swiftly dispelled attitude that as well as doing his bit for King and Country, the war would provide adventure, allowing him to escape the deathly morass of office life. Gore-Langton paints an amusing,

irony-laden picture of Sherriff's Pooterish pater, also in insurance. His was a career of attrition: "Robert noted that his father started as junior clerk in one corner of the office and forty-five years later ended up in the opposite corner as senior clerk, an average move, he computed, of five inches a year."

That keen eye for detail served him – and us – well; the letters and diaries that Gore-Langton draws from – along with other research – were meticulous enough to confirm that many notable aspects of Journey's End corresponded with the author's first-hand experiences. The opening vignette of an officer drying out a sock over a candle, the greeting of the new boy (Raleigh) with a glass of whisky and the bitter outcry when it's discovered there's no pepper – all these rank as authentic touches, and his dialogue was almost a form of faithful reportage.

Perhaps most fascinating is the psychological identification Sherriff must have felt with the disintegrating Stanhope and to a lesser extent the demoralised Hibbert, who pretends to have neuralgia. At times he battled to cope. In one fear-soaked diary entry he couldn't even muster complete sentences: "Shell whizzes over… feel sick – breathing comes hard heart beats. NERVES."

"Luckily" for Sherriff he was invalided out – got a "Blighty one" – at Passchendale, his face embedded with bits of concrete from a shattered German pillbox. It was almost as much of a fluke that his modest play, which had little obvious commercial appeal and might easily have been passed over as lacking novel interest for a war-weary public, got taken up for a short set of performances at the Apollo. The rest is theatrical history and Gore-Langton charts it all with respectful, awed aplomb.

***Journey's End*: An Account of the Changing Responses Towards the First World War's Representation**

Amanda Phipps
https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/students/retrospectives/issues/amanda-phipps.pdf

Section 3 - How do human beings cope with the horrors of war?

Key questions	Core knowledge	Terminology & vocabulary	Discussion, reading & writing
Big questions: How do human beings cope with the horrors of war? Is it better to feel pain or numbness? **Key questions:** What is modernism? How is modernism a reaction to WW1?	Features of modernism: - individualism (the individual is more important than society) - experimentation (breaking free of old forms & techniques) - absurdity (the violence of the war = madness) - symbolism (reality has multiple layers) - formalism (art is a process made of parts) Although *Journey's End* seems stylistically conventional. Yet if we consider the play's concerns — such as waiting and the absurdity of life, or at least life when viewed from the trenches — we can appreciate a certain modernist mode of thought. Which of the above features apply to the play? Texts: - Ian Beck, Propping Up The Line - Wilfred Owen, 'Exposure' - Alcoholism and the First World War.	**Terminology** modernism symbolism absurdity individualism formalism **Vocabulary** **brutality** **alcoholism** **neuralgia** **prohibit**	**Structured discussions**: To what extent is Journey's End a modernist play? **Couch to 5 k writing**: How do writers convey the horrors of war? Should Hibbert be sent on medical leave? (Persuasive writing) Compare how RC Sherriff and Wilfred Owen present the horrors of war. **Reading fluency**: Scenes from *Journey's End*

Expert knowledge

One biographer, Antony Cronin, terms Samuel Beckett (a man who was not only a Nobel laureate but also won the Croix de Guerre (cross of war) for his work with the French resistance during the Second World War) the last modernist. Consider the extent to which you believe Beckett and Sheriff might have shared some of the same concerns.

- The following article explores the popularity of Beckett's seminal play, *Waiting for Godot*, whose sense of waiting and the futility of waiting we see in *Journey's End*: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-20889073
- The following site promotes the 2015 production of *Happy Days* in which a woman is buried up to her waist in sand. There is also a range of related links: http://www.youngvic.org/whats-on/happy-days
- The following review from the *New York Times* is worth reading for its final paragraphs, which consider Sheriff as a precursor to Beckett: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/22/theater/r-c-sherriffs-journeys-end-a-remembrance-of-war.html

Lesson 1

Recap:

- What year is *Journey's End* set?
- How does Stanhope 'cope' with the experience of war?
- What is Hibbert's strategy for coping with the war?
- What does 'insubordination' mean?
- What is 'comradeship'?

Teach:

- Introduce the word 'brutality'
- Read Ian Beck's short story 'Propping up the Line' and Wilfred Owen's poem 'Exposure'.
- Discuss the different ways these writers convey the horrors of war.

Process:

- Students to construct and complete a table like the one on p 27 of the student workbook

Check understanding:

- Choose two of the three texts. Which conveys the reality of war most successfully?
- One sentence thesis statement: Although [point about text 1], [point about text 2 which suggests it is more successful.]

Lesson 2

Teach:

- Introduce the word 'alcoholism'
- Re-read p 8 where Hardy talks about earwig races (display a picture of an earwig)
- Introduce the concept of symbolism (that one thing represents another e.g., a rose can represent love etc.)
- What do the earwigs symbolise? Explore the ways in which earwigs are similar to the soldiers (helpless, 'guided by matches', 'dipped in whiskey' etc.)

Process:

- Students to search for quotations on p 4-6 that show Hardy's view that Stanhope is an alcoholic ('drinking like a fish' etc.)
- They should locate and record a minimum of 5 quotations

Check understanding:

- Compare how Hardy and Osborne view Stanhope's drinking.
- One sentence thesis statement: Despite Hardy's view that [something negative about Stanhope], Osborne says [something positive about Stanhope].

Lesson 3

Recap:

- Select a maximum of 5 recall questions. Ensure that these are items of knowledge that have been previously taught.
- Feel free to introduce recall of knowledge from previous topics studied in the curriculum – these do not have to be linked to the topic being studied.

Teach:
- Introduce the word 'prohibit'
- Read the article, Alcoholism and the First World War.
- Get students to discuss the following questions:
- Why was the government concerned about the consumption of alcohol and what measure did they take to solve the problem?
- Look closely at the image below. What is in picture? What messages are these propaganda images sending?
- Look again at the paragraph about controlling women's drinking (line 21-26.) What does *The Times* newspaper imply about women's proper roles and responsibilities?
- What measure did the government introduce to control alcoholism?
- Were these attempts to prevent alcoholism successful?

Process:
- Use evidence to prove a point: How do we know the government's attempts to control alcoholism were successful?
- Look for evidence on lines 60-71.
- Students to use at least one selected item of evidence to complete the single sentence answer: The fact that "_____" suggests the government's attempts to control alcohol were successful.

Check understanding:
- Sentence expanding:
- The government was concerned about the effects of alcoholism because [provide a reason]
- The government was concerned about the effects of alcoholism but [suggest something that shows they were successful in controlling it]
- The government attempted to control the sale of alcohol so [what did they decide to do?]

Lesson 4

Recap:
- It might be useful to get students to recall information about Hibbert and 'cowardice', but otherwise use the same approach as in previous lessons.

Teach:
- Introduce the word 'neuralgia'
- Reread p. 54- 58, focussing on Hibbert's attempts to 'cope' with the war.
- How does Sherriff present Hibbert? Is he sympathetic? Do modern understandings of PTSD help us feel more understanding? Is he a coward?

Process:
- Find evidence that Hibbert's attempts to cope are unsuccessful
- Students to write a 2 sentence answer to this question: What does the characterisation of Hibbert tell us about the reality of war?
- Sentence 1 = thesis statement: Despite [how Hibbert tries to cope], [what the results of his behaviour?]

- Sentence 2: “This is shown when he says “ _____.”

Check understanding:
- Sentence combining:
    - Soldiers in WW1 tried to cope with the horrors of war through drinking alcohol.
    - Some soldiers were clearly suffering from post-traumatic stress.
    - One way to cope with war was to feign illness in order to be sent home.

Annotated copies of texts from students' workbook

Propping up the Line, Ian Beck (2014)

Alfred felt something move. It came out of the mud in the dark behind his back where he sat cold and drowsily slumped against the trench wall. Something small and warmly alive pushed itself between the wooden slats and his battledress jacket. It touched for an instant the small exposed area of his pale dirty skin just where his jacket and vest were folded and rucked up together. He could feel something struggling and pushing to get past him. He shot up in revulsion – he knew just what it was: a filthy…

'Rat!' he shouted to no one in particular. [34]

He saw it there, pushing through and twisting its head, saw the wet greasy fur and its mean red eyes. He kicked at it and missed. The rat scuttled out from the tiny gap between the slat supports and ran across the mud. Normally Alfred would have let it go. Rats were, after all, commonplace but something, whether pent-up anger… hate… loss… pain… boredom, whichever it was made him give chase after it.

The creature appeared sluggish, as if it were weighed down with overeating. It had most likely been feeding on what was caught, left behind, in the lines and coils of barbed wire which stretched for miles beyond the trench.[35] The terrible sad debris of dead soldiers. The remains that were left behind after a 6am push.

Before it was light, after the heavy artillery bombardments and the whistles and the bright spray of the flares and the shouting and the Very lights[36], the men streamed over, filtered through the narrow gaps in the wire. Whole portions of them however were miraculously[37] left behind – bits of men hooked up and hanging there for all to see, like the display in an awful butcher's shop window; or if there were enough shreds and rags of uniform still attached to the limbs, then it was more like the washing on the line flapping on a Monday morning at home.[38]

Alfred had grown almost used to such sights.[39]

Almost used to seeing the remains of men he had sometimes known and shared fag time and mugs of tea with.

Almost used to them being suddenly torn apart and scattered around here and there or falling like rain into the mud.

Almost used[40] to them being thrown up in the air along with the astonishingly loud shellbursts.

Used to[41] seeing the remains chucked around among the living like so much discarded offal. Used to seeing legs, hands, heads and sometimes faces stare up at him blankly from the grey mud. Used to seeing his pals' insides suddenly all spilled out from between their buttons, or poking through the rips and gaps in their uniforms. Used to seeing their innards fully exposed in the cold light of the outside where they didn't belong at all. Where they were never meant to be seen. He knew it was

[34] Contrast to Baldrick's attitude to rats in Blackadder – why does the comedy work?
[35] What might this be? Think of the descriptions in the extract from Birdsong
[36] *Very lights – brilliant white flares used at night to show the approaching enemy*
[37] An incongruous choice of word – what is the writer trying to suggest?
[38] Note the juxtaposition of horror and the everyday – where else have we seen this in the texts studied?
[39] Does this explain why the everyday imagery is used?
[40] What's the effect of the repetition of "almost"? Does it emphasise the implied 'but not quite'?
[41] What's the impact of 'almost' **not** being repeated? Has he become immune to **some** horrors?

wrong to be even remotely used to such sights, or to any of it, even for a second, let alone for ever…[42]

The rat zigzagged through the mud down the service trench, passed a wooden sign. It hesitated at the base of a trench ladder, and Alfred finally smashed it down into the mud. He felt its tiny backbone crack under his boot[43] and he had a moment of fleeting sympathy for it; just another dirty dead thing, another of God's creatures that had given up the ghost in the mud like so many others, and no one there to grieve its loss but him. He twisted his boot on the rat, pushing its bloated little body further into the mire.[44]

[42] Wrong on what level? Wrong that human beings should ever experience such things, or is Alfred wrong?
[43] Link this to the earwigs in *Journey's End* – what does the rat represent?
[44] Why, after having felt "fleeting sympathy," does he twist the rat into the mud?

'Exposure,' Wilfred Owen

Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knive us . . .
Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent . . .
Low drooping flares confuse our memory of the salient . . .
Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous,
But nothing happens.

- Dying soldiers are caught on barbed wire in No Man's Land
- "Incessantly" – unending (annoying?) but disconnected "a dull rumour"
- Is the question rhetorical?

Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire,
Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.
Northward, incessantly, the flickering gunnery rumbles,
Far off, like a dull rumour of some other war.
What are we doing here?

- Dawn should be a time of hope
- But the war – and the weather – lasts
- Dawn is personified as an army in grey uniforms

The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow . . .
We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.
Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army
Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of grey,
But nothing happens.

- Sibilance makes us pay attention – poem seems to speed up. Lots of active verbs
- Alliteration of the glide sound /w/ slows us down – nothing to see

Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.
Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow,
With sidelong flowing flakes that flock, pause, and renew,
We watch them wandering up and down the wind's nonchalance,
But nothing happens.

- More personification – snow 'fingering stealth'
- Even the sun makes then imagine they might be dead

Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for our faces—
We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and stare, snow-dazed,
Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,
Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses.
—Is it that we are dying?

- Other sign of hope, camp fires = described as 'crusted'
- They are shut out, abandoned with only the dying for company

Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires, glozed
With crusted dark-red jewels; crickets jingle there;
For hours the innocent mice rejoice: the house is theirs;
Shutters and doors, all closed: on us the doors are closed,—
We turn back to our dying.

- All that which should bring hope – fires, the sun, God's love seems to be absent or 'dying'
- Dread of the frost to come – it's a prediction.
- Will the soldiers on watch die or are they out there to bury the dead?

Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn;
Now ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.
For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were born,
For love of God seems dying.

Tonight, this frost will fasten on this mud and us,
Shrivelling many hands, and puckering foreheads crisp.
The burying-party, picks and shovels in shaking grasp,
Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,
But nothing happens.

Alcohol and the First World War

The British government became concerned about the consumption of alcohol during the First World War. They feared that war production was being hampered by drunkenness. Other governments involved in the conflict were also worried about this problem. In August 1914 Tsar Nicholas II outlawed the production and sale of vodka. This involved the closing down of Russia's 400 state distilleries and 28,000 spirit shops. The measure was a complete failure, as people, unable to buy vodka, produced their own. The Russian government also suffered a 30% reduction in its tax revenue.[45]

Attempts to reduce alcohol consumption were also made in Germany, Austria-Hungary, France and Italy. In Britain, David Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, led the campaign against alcohol. He had been told by shipbuilders and heads of war factories, that men's wages had gone up so much that they could earn in two or three days what would keep them in drink for a week.[46] A Newcastle shipbuilder complained that double overtime on Sunday meant no attendance on Monday." In January 1915, Lloyd George told the Shipbuilding Employers Federation that Britain was "fighting German's, Austrians and Drink, and as far as I can see the greatest of these foes is Drink."

Lloyd George started a campaign to persuade national figures to make a pledge that they would not drink alcohol during the war. In April 1915 King George V supported the campaign when he promised that no alcohol would be consumed in the Royal household until the war was over. Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War and Richard Haldane, the Lord Chancellor, followed the king's example, but Herbert Asquith, who was a heavy drinker, refused to take the pledge. *The National Review* commented: "The failure of the Prime Minister to take the King's Pledge has naturally aroused comment." Asquith retorted angrily that Lloyd George had "completely lost his head on drink.[47]

The government was particularly concerned about the amount of alcohol being consumed by female munition workers. A survey of four pubs in London revealed that in one hour on a Saturday night alcohol was consumed by 1,483 men and 1,946 women. Newspapers claimed that soldiers' wives were "drinking away their over-generous allowances".[48] *The Times* reported that "we do not all realise the increase in drinking there has been among the mothers of the coming race, though we may yet find it a circumstance darkly menacing to our civilisation".

In October 1915 the British government announced several measures they believed would reduce alcohol consumption. A "No Treating Order" laid down that any drink ordered was to be paid for by the person supplied.[49] The maximum penalty for defying the Government order was six months' imprisonment. *The Spectator* gave its support to the legislation. It

[45] Why include this information? Does it make the attempt to control alcohol futile?
[46] Make connection to 'Munition Wages'. Also, what does this suggest about living conditions that excess money is spent on alcohol?
[47] Interesting use of role models – think about the shipbuilders in the previous paragraph – how much might they be influenced by the King's Pledge?
[48] Is this fair? Should allowances have been less "generous"?
[49] Is it right that people should be fined for buying someone else a drink?. How might this practice cause problems?

argued that it was the custom of the working-classes to buy drinks for "chance-met acquaintances,[50] each of whom then had to stand a drink to everyone else" and believed that this measure would "free hundreds of thousands of men from an expensive and senseless social tyranny".

It was reported in *The Morning Post* on 14th March, 1916: "At Southampton yesterday Robert Andrew Smith was fined for treating his wife to a glass of wine in a local public-house. He said his wife gave him sixpence to pay for her drink. Mrs Smith was also fined £1 for consuming and Dorothy Brown, the barmaid, £5 for selling the intoxicant, contrary to the regulations of the Liquor Control Board."

Ernest Sackville Turner, in his book, *Dear Old Blighty* has pointed out: "In Newcastle police reported a licensee who, with his manager, had sought to evade punishment by causing a customer who had ordered eight drinks to consume all of them. As time passed the Order began to be flouted, to the relief of bar-room scroungers who had been having a thin time, but the police fought back. In Middlesbrough fines on innkeepers went as high as £40. The licensing authorities had powers to close public-houses which allowed treating and occasionally exercised them."

Public House opening times in cities and industrial areas were also reduced to 12.00 noon to 2.30 pm and 6.30 to 9.30 pm. Before the law was changed, public houses could open from 5 am in the morning to 12.30 pm at night. However, in most rural areas, people could continue to buy alcoholic drinks throughout the day.

The government also became concerned about the increase in alcohol consumption in certain areas. An enormous cordite munitions factory built to supply ammunition to British forces had been established in the small town of Gretna.[51] Over 15,000 people, many of them from Ireland, had moved to the area to provide the work-force for the factory. They lived in neighbouring villages and spent much of their leisure time in the public-houses of Carlisle. Most of the workers were well-behaved but the drunkenness convictions quadrupled.

The government attempted to solve the problem by buying up the local breweries and 320 licensed premises. In Carlisle 48 out of 119 public-houses were shut down. The advertising of alcohol in the area was banned. So also was the selling of spirits on Saturdays. Salaried civil servants were brought in as managers of the public-houses with no inducement to push sales and ordered to install eating-rooms and to abolish "snugs". It was also prohibited to serve alcohol to people under the age of eighteen in the town.[52]

The government also increased the level of tax on alcohol. In 1918 a bottle of whisky cost £1, five times what he had cost before the outbreak of war. This helped to reduce alcoholic consumption. Whereas Britain consumed 89 million gallons in 1914, this had fallen to 37 million in 1918. Convictions for drunkenness also fell dramatically during the war.

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[50] Return to this when social class is discussed – what does it suggest about attitudes to poorer sections of society?

[51] On the border with Scotland

[52] Compare to modern attitudes to drugs/smoking

In London in 1914, 67,103 people were found guilty of being drunk. In 1917 this had fallen to 16,567.[53]

Questions

1. Why was the government concerned about the consumption of alcohol and what measure did they take to solve the problem?
2. Look closely at the image below. What is in picture? What messages are these propaganda images sending?

3. Look again at the paragraph about controlling women's drinking (line 21-26.) What does The Times newspaper imply about women's proper roles and responsibilities?
4. What measure did the government introduce to control alcoholism?
5. Were these attempts to prevent alcoholism successful?

[53] Was this a success? Were people drinking less or had anything else changed?

Additional reading

The horror and futility of war in *Journey's End*

BBC Bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znpx382/revision/2

Before 1914, Britain had been a much more confident and powerful nation than it was in 1918. In 1914 it would never have occurred to anyone to question the morality of war or the ability of the country's leaders. But after the war was over, plays such as *Journey's End* and many anti-war poems shook this unquestioning confidence.

Journey's End focuses on life in the trenches. Stage directions show little comfort. The sounds of war permeate. The constant references to rats, cold and damp etc highlight how difficult life was for men who discuss the comfort of their homes and gardens. This is combined with the feeling of constant boredom and waiting.

Young, able and - in many cases - highly educated men suffer these conditions. The overall effect is to make the audience question the wisdom of wasting their potential in this No Man's Land.

It is sometimes easy to think that soldiers in wars are always fighting battles. But the play shows that for most of the time it's a matter of waiting. What soldiers do to fill the hours under such horrendous stress is a major theme. Sherriff wanted his audiences to understand just how this tense prolonged waiting was an untold horror of war. This helps create a subtle anti-war message.

One of Sherriff's skills is to construct a tense plot, whilst also showing the boredom of trench life. The humour and friendly banter between the officers is juxtaposed with talk of battle and fear. This reminds us that they are on the front line, and also has the effect of showing us that these are human beings.

We see the men being concerned about what is for breakfast, discussing gardening and sports, and feeling nervous and scared before going into battle. This removes the glamour and heroism sometimes associated with fighting for one's country in the propaganda of the time. It also undermines the jingoistic works of poets like Jessie Pope.

Reading some of the anti-war works by soldier poets such as Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen will give you an idea of how war really looked in contrast to the propaganda. The youth of the men is also emphasised to reinforce the waste of young lives.

Note how the word "boy" is repeated in the stage directions as Raleigh is dying, and how the simile "like a child" is used to describe how the Sergeant Major carries him.

All of the young, enthusiastic, able men are dead by the end of the play - reminding the audience, then and now, of the great losses in war.

Courage and cowardice in Journey's End

BBC Bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znpx382/revision/3

Journey's End is at heart about how men deal with almost certain death, constant fear, sudden and intense horror, attack and maiming. The play touched the hearts and minds of audiences watching only a decade after the war had been fought. The men all deal with the horrors of war differently and Sheriff uses each character to show the various things soldiers did to cope.

We are immediately made aware of Stanhope's drinking problem in the opening dialogue between Osborne and Hardy, who asks if Stanhope is "drinking like a fish as usual?" It becomes clear throughout the play that Stanhope is a brave soldier and a courageous leader. However, he uses alcohol to give him 'Dutch courage' - a term believed to have originated in a much earlier war because of soldiers' reliance on Dutch gin to prepare them for the horrors of battle.

Stanhope himself admits that after "that awful affair on Vimy Ridge … There were only two ways of breaking the strain. One was pretending I was ill – and going home; the other was this." The stage directions tell us he "holds up his glass" as he says this. Is Sheriff suggesting that remaining courageous in the face of unbelievable fear and horror always comes at a cost?

Raleigh's boyish patriotic myth of the hero as some kind of knight in shining armour - and his "hero-worship" of Stanhope - introduces us to the concept of heroism. Supporting the war effort and fighting for one's country was glorified by propaganda and poets such as Jesse Pope, who painted a romantic picture of the heroes doing their duty for England. This led to soldiers and officers being pressurised to live up to the expectation of heroism.

We see that Stanhope's real fear is that his reputation back home as a 'hero' will be ruined if anyone finds out about his alcoholism. This is shown in the desperate way he "clutches Raleigh's wrist and tears the letter from his hand" – a letter which could reveal the truth about his drinking to his girlfriend, Madge. His really heroic acts - like volunteering for the raid - are juxtaposed with his alcoholism to show the cost of true bravery.

Juxtaposed with Stanhope's brave attitude to his duty is Hibbert, who decides to attempt what Stanhope says is the other alternative to "break the strain". Hibbert chooses "pretending to be ill". His situation shows us what focusing on death can do to the nerves and health. Stanhope however refuses to believe Hibbert and talks him round to staying, at one stage threatening him with execution for desertion. Stanhope's opinions of Hibbert range from "artful little swine" to "repulsive little mind".

It is never made clear if Hibbert is just a coward or if he has a real mental illness, but his fear is shown through his dialogue and the stage directions. Here Sherriff uses verbs such as "quivering" and "trembling", as well as "timidly" to describe him.

Osborne bravely accepts his fate when told he is to join the raid. But his advice to naïve Raleigh to "Think of it all as - as romantic. It helps" suggests he too realises Raleigh would do well to continue glorifying the war, as the reality can be too much to bear.

Osborne himself seems to use similar tactics when he reads a childhood book - *Alice in Wonderland* - for comfort while waiting for the raid to start. In showing the tactics men employ to stay strong and courageous, Sheriff subtly conveys the fear they try not to show.

Sherriff also uses contrasts in physical descriptions to build up the audience's perception of heroic characters. For example, when the tall and slim Stanhope first appears on set he is with chubby red-faced Trotter. This emphasises the heroic physical attributes of Stanhope and helps us to understand the boyish love Raleigh has for him. Hibbert's desire to leave and his pretence of illness is contrasted with the heroic perseverance of Stanhope who has "never had a rest" according to Osborne.

However, Sherriff also uses these contrasts to show how the men suffer to stay brave - the contrast of Trotter's addiction to food with Stanhope's addiction to alcohol is used to show how everyone uses crutches to deal with the horrors of war. They may choose different things to help them cope, but in the end everyone finds their own way of "breaking the strain".

Stanhope - like Sherriff himself - has been awarded a Military Cross for bravery and so has received the official hero's reward. The Colonel promises Raleigh an MC for taking part in the raid. The fact that he dies in battle a short while later shows the futility of such medals. However, we can look at the deaths of men like Raleigh and Osborne as futile in one way, but agree that doing what they thought was their duty - voluntarily in Osborne's case because of his age - was heroic. Their superiors may have orchestrated the battles and riots, but it was the brave officers who put their lives in danger and died.

Trotter portrays another version of a hero. He is a working class officer who copes with the strain by eating too much and talking of down to earth pleasures such as his garden. Despite his lower class status, he is made second in command after the death of Osborne. This shows Stanhope's trust in his ability and loyalty. The last we see of Trotter is when he "disappears into the dark" as the battle commences. Then Stanhope receives a message from him in the closing scene, summoning him to "come at once". We assume that he is killed. Trotter may not be the conventional ex-public school pupil that we have come to understand as heroic, but his bravery helps us to question our own perception of just what a hero is.

The Main Characteristics of Modernist Literature, Josh Patrick
https://penandthepad.com/themes-english-restoration-poetry-1856.html

Literature scholars differ over the years that encompass the Modernist period, however most generally agree that modernist authors published as early as the 1880s and into the mid-1940s. During this period, society at every level underwent profound changes. War and industrialization seemed to devalue the individual. Global communication made the world a smaller place. The pace of change was dizzying. Writers responded to this new world in a variety of ways.

Individualism

In Modernist literature, the individual is more interesting than society. Specifically, modernist writers were fascinated with how the individual adapted to the changing world. In some cases, the individual triumphed over obstacles. For the most part, Modernist literature featured characters who just kept their heads above water. Writers presented the world or society as a challenge to the integrity of their characters. Ernest Hemingway is especially remembered for vivid characters who accepted their circumstances at face value and persevered.

Experimentation

Modernist writers broke free of old forms and techniques. Poets abandoned traditional rhyme schemes and wrote in free verse. Novelists defied all expectations. Writers mixed images from the past with modern languages and themes, creating a collage of styles. The inner workings of consciousness were a common subject for modernists. This preoccupation led to a form of narration called stream of consciousness, where the point of view of the novel meanders in a pattern resembling human thought. Authors James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, along with poets T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, are well known for their experimental Modernist works.

Absurdity

The carnage of two World Wars profoundly affected writers of the period. Several great English poets died or were wounded in WWI. At the same time, global capitalism was reorganizing society at every level. For many writers, the world was becoming a more absurd place every day. The mysteriousness of life was being lost in the rush of daily life. The senseless violence of WWII was yet more evidence that humanity had lost its way. Modernist authors depicted this absurdity in their works. Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis," in which a traveling salesman is transformed into an insect-like creature, is an example of modern absurdism.

Symbolism

The Modernist writers infused objects, people, places and events with significant meanings. They imagined a reality with multiple layers, many of them hidden or in a sort of code. The idea of a poem as a riddle to be cracked had its beginnings in the Modernist period. Symbolism was not a new concept in literature, but the Modernists' particular use of symbols was an innovation. They left much more to the reader's imagination than earlier

writers, leading to open-ended narratives with multiple interpretations. For example, James Joyce's "Ulysses" incorporates distinctive, open-ended symbols in each chapter.

Formalism

Writers of the Modernist period saw literature more as a craft than a flowering of creativity. They believed that poems and novels were constructed from smaller parts instead of the organic, internal process that earlier generations had described. The idea of literature as craft fed the Modernists' desire for creativity and originality. Modernist poetry often includes foreign languages, dense vocabulary and invented words. The poet e.e. cummings abandoned all structure and spread his words all across the page.

La Guerre (I) by E. E. Cummings

Humanity i love you
because you would rather black the boots of
success than enquire whose soul dangles from his
watch-chain which would be embarrassing for both

parties and because you
unflinchingly applaud all
songs containing the words country home and
mother when sung at the old howard

Humanity i love you because
when you're hard up you pawn your
intelligence to buy a drink and when
you're flush pride keeps

you from the pawn shop and
because you are continually committing
nuisances but more
especially in your own house

Humanity i love you because you
are perpetually putting the secret of
life in your pants and forgetting
it's there and sitting down

on it
and because you are
forever making poems in the lap
of death Humanity

i hate you

“Earwigs in Whiskey”, Mark Payton

The English Review:

The original article can be found at: https://bit.ly/3Bb5S0y

Before I came to my senses and became a teacher, I spent many years as an actor. Among a variety of treasured experiences, one of the most memorable was filming R. C. Sherriff’s Journey’s End for the BBC in 1988, in which I played the naive and callow Raleigh.

At the time the film's producer, Shaun Sutton, and director, Michael Simpson, had to fight hard to persuade the BBC to give the project the green light, as many questioned the play's relevance to a modern audience. It seemed old-fashioned, merely another period piece, much like its contemporaries by Coward and Rattigan, not worth reviving for an audience concerned with more pressing social and political issues. But when the production was broadcast in November 1988, close to Remembrance Day, it was warmly received and was honoured with several television festival awards. Critics praised its ‘ambiguous’ treatment of the play's message. A piece that had principally seemed to celebrate public school values of stoicism and esprit de corps had, with television's hard-hitting realism, found a clear identity as a critique of the naivety with which patriotism and warfare are indulged.

This seemed to get to the heart of Sherriff's original purpose when he wrote the play in 1928, to combine respect for the men who experienced the horrors of war with outrage and satirical disapprobation at the futility of war itself. The former, in its primary incarnation and in subsequent productions, had made the play almost cosy, full of outmoded glorification of loyalty, duty and courage; but it is in the latter, the protest, that the play retains its timeless and universal power. Sherriff was well known in his days as a serving officer in the First World War for his stiff-upper-lipped ’mustn't grumble’ character, embodied in the staunch attitude of Osborne, Raleigh and Stanhope, but as a playwright he ensured that Journey’s End is as thorough an exploration of tragedy and the pity and inhumanity of war as it is possible to create.

Text and context: setting and performance

On the first day of filming, I arrived on set just as a bleak January dawn was revealing the grim contours of Welsh moorland that constitute Celligaer Common near Merthyr Tydfil. The local council had allowed the BBC to dig up tons of mud and transform the landscape into an eerily accurate representation of the trenches and no-man's-land of the First World War. Much of the play's impact in the theatre is due to its claustrophobic setting: the action never moves out of the dim dugout throughout the six scenes. For the film version, however, I was to be bombarded by explosives on arrival in the trenches, enact the raid in Act Three through the ruins of farm and tank, and be immersed up to my neck in mud and water at the bottom of a bomb crater for the film's final image.

The director was keen to make the most of our location to add a sense of the ghastly reality of trench warfare to the intense theatricality of the interior scenes. To retain the intimacy of the dugout, the designer achieved the effective compromise of creating something which was half-set, half-location: a partially- excavated dugout covered with canvas to maintain the darkness and oppressively enclosed nature of the original. This, in the middle of a Welsh winter, ensured that it was bitterly cold, and that the camera could register our frosty breath and catch every genuine shiver and cold-nipped nose.

An act of remembrance

On that first morning, as we explored the trenches (which had been dug a month earlier and left to fill with icy water, so that freezing mud had saturated every duckboard and sandbag), mv colleague, who was playing Mason the cook, observed in true Masonesque tones, 'Blimey, it's like, you know, actually being there'. That was something we felt every day as we lived through the mud, the cold and the emotional upheaval. It did not escape our notice that we were fortunate to leave the trenches for hot baths and a warm hotel every night, and that we were merely actors.

However, for all of us, filming *Journey's End* became something of an act of remembrance. I thought of my own grandfather who, like Stanhope, had survived many months of trench warfare and was awarded the Military Cross (MC), and I revisited an account he had written of his experiences — written for posterity as an alternative, so my mother said, to actually talking about his traumatic time at the front. My own personal process of remembrance undoubtedly affected my performance — I even used my grandfather's silver cigarette case as a prop, an elegant and appropriate contrast to the barbarism and chaos of the surroundings, which allowed me in some way to channel his ordeal and link it to Raleigh's.

So the play, in the BBC's screen adaptation, emerged as still relevant and poignant in 1988. Is it still so today? With its inclusion in the exam syllabus and with frequent recent revivals, it would seem that it is still achieving its original purpose, and with the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War it is surely time to re-evaluate its impact on today's audience.

Brutal modernism?

One of the problems modern audiences have with *Journey's End* is its quaintness. Ridiculously anachronistic language such as 'How topping if we both get the MC!' 'What a topping girl she was!', and a plethora of 'cheeros' and 'rightos' and feeling 'jolly bucked' seems to suggest that these characters are irrevocably distant from us across a wide gap of time. Yet the play embraces a brutal modernism which perhaps accounts for its undeniably consistent and undiminished impact. It is possible to make a case for R. C. Sherriff as a modernist playwright less aligned with Noel Coward's sentimental view of warfare in *Cavalcade*, and more imbued with the spirit of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* in its shared preoccupation with futility and loss — and even without Eliot's glimpse of redemption. The examination of an apparently cruel and random universe also places Sherriff in a tradition expanded by Beckett and Pinter in later twentieth- century drama texts concerned with the triviality and mundanity of life, with hopelessness and existential angst.

Even in the first scene the audience is introduced to the startlingly modern themes of alcoholism and what we now call post-traumatic stress disorder, as Hardy recounts how Stanhope had once got drunk, 'knocked all the glasses off the table! Lost control of himself; and then he — sort of — came to — and cried —'. The subject is brushed aside and there follows a typical Sherriff moment of whimsical comedy, a thread which he weaves throughout the play to act as counterpoint to the darkness and tragedy: the account of the earwig races. Hardy's earnest advice to Osborne: 'If you want to get the best pace out of an earwig, dip it in whisky — makes 'em go like hell!' is, on the surface, part of a comic catalogue of devices by which the men try to distract themselves from the fear and horror of

war. But it also acts as a metaphorical comment on the absurdity of the human situation: creatures with no sense of purpose or direction are driven along by their superiors, in some absurd game in which only whisky can make things better.

When the 1988 BBC team came to shoot the first scene between Osborne and Raleigh, I was struck by the similarity between Sherriff's vision and that of Beckett in his absurdist drama *Waiting for Godot*, perhaps the twentieth-century theatre's most eloquent expression of the futility of waiting hopefully for a redemption that never arrives. Raleigh remarks, 'How frightfully quiet it is!' and Osborne points out that 'the Germans are sitting in their dugouts, thinking how quiet it is' to which Raleigh responds, 'It seems — uncanny. It makes me feel we're — we're all just waiting for something.' Even the characters' situation, half-buried in the earth, and unable to escape, is reminiscent of Beckett's scenario in *Happy Days*.

Ultimately, what they are waiting for is, of course, death, and Sherriff uses stage props as visual aids to explore with sardonic humour the way we all tend to deal with that, by focusing on the trivial as a distraction: how distressing it is that a tin of pineapple chunks turns out to be apricots; how impressive that a photo of Trotter's hollyhock shows it to be the height of the summer house. The audience is frequently transported back to the idealised world of the Home Front as a wistful contrast to the squalor of the dugout, juxtaposing the essential decency and generosity of humanity (when Osborne remarks of the hollyhock 'A beauty isn't it?' Raleigh replies 'Rather!') with the evil of war. After the story of the 'decent' German officer who helped them rescue a wounded comrade before violent conflict resumed, Raleigh observes 'It all seems rather — silly, doesn't it?' Significantly, this anti-war sentiment is expressed by the most enthusiastic and innocent of the characters and encapsulates Sherriff's view.

Journey's End: 1928

By 1928, ten years after the war had ended, the mood that Sherriff captured and reflected was decidedly one of disillusionment with simplistic notions of heroism and victory. It is interesting to note that while Owen could explore the futility and Sassoon the darkly comic absurdity of war with the immediacy of their wartime poetry, the theatre had to wait for ten years before the subject could be approached. Perhaps the realism of the drama and the ordinariness of the characters brought home the desperate tragedy of the Great War in a way that had been too painful in its immediate aftermath.

Sherriff's remarkable achievement is to lay bare vitally important themes which too many people, like my grandfather, were all too ready to avoid and deny. In Act Two we are given a disturbing insight into what lies beneath the constant attempts at distraction and forgetting. Stanhope muses on Trotter's supposed lack of imagination: 'if Trotter looks at that wall he just sees a brown surface. He doesn't see into the earth beyond — the worms...stones and roots.' We are made aware that, in this brutal world, looking beyond the superficial can be dangerous for one's sanity: 'It's a habit that's grown on me lately — look right through things...till I get frightened and stop.' But a key message of the play must be that we should follow our natural human inclination to 'look right through things', even if we are afraid of being dismissed as 'potty'; and that we should, despite Osborne's well-meaning advice to 'talk about something else', see the war- torn world for what it is, the waste land of Stanhope's vision from the parapet: 'just an enormous plain, all churned up like a sea that's got muddier and muddier till it's so stiff that it can't move'

The absurdity of life

Even Osborne, so eager to keep calm and 'forget the war', is subtly revealed as contemplating the absurdity of life as profoundly as the angst-ridden Stanhope. His choice of reading on the day before he faces — and meets — his death in the foolhardy raid in Act Three is *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Trotter is incredulous: 'I don't see no point in that' to which Osborne replies, 'Exactly. That's just the point.' Sherriff even underlines the pointlessness of pursuing the war by returning to Lewis Carroll's 'nonsense' verse, as Osborne seeks to divert Raleigh from his anxiety about going into action:

> 'The time has come,' the Walrus said, 'to talk of many things...'

Raleigh's chiming in to finish off the verse ('And whether pigs have wings') seems to signal his immersion in the nonsensical world where he too, in a matter of hours, will meet his journey's end. In the theatrical staging, the play ends with Raleigh buried as a shell lands on the roof. In the film version I was carefully placed in a mess of mud, rubble and snowmelt at the bottom of a crater, as the camera panned out to reveal the utter desolation of the obliterated dugout. As I stared at the sky between takes, the icy water seeping into my wetsuit (concealed beneath my muddied and bloodied uniform), I became acutely aware that we, in faithfully serving the play, had helped to achieve what Sherriff had set out to do: to remind us of the grim reality and tragedy of war, and of the need to reassess, 'to see into the earth beyond' to recognise when things seem 'rather silly' and to strive to avoid becoming as aimless as earwigs dipped in whisky.

Staging the war, ***Luke McBratney***

Building on Mark Payton's article, these teaching notes suggest ways to enrich your reading of *Journey's End* by considering both its dramatic features and its wider contexts.

Dramatic effects

Consider the effects of the *set* used in a production of the play. You might like to look back at the second column of Mark Payton's article and think about how feelings of claustrophobia and discomfort were achieved in Simpson's televised version of the play and what Cameron Porteous says about the set in the production by Christopher Newton:

http://www.shawfest.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Shaw_Study_Guide_Journeys_End.pdf

Think about how *props* are used in the play to create humour and suggest absurdity.

How do you think the inclusion of exterior scenes in the BBC version might affect the way we view the play? Does this change diminish the claustrophobic power of the primary text, which never moves beyond the dugout, or add an important new dimension to the drama that was simply unavailable to R. C. Sherriff in 1928?

Performance

Consider the ways in which the context of performance can affect a production's reception. Think about what Mark Payton says about the Michael Simpson version being performed

near Remembrance Day in November 1988 and Dominic Cavendish's comments about the effects of the play being performed during the time of war with Afghanistan in his review for the *Daily Telegraph*:

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/drama/3672975/On-the-road-Journeys-End-and-Fast- Labour.html

Think also about why audiences responded so well to the play when it was first staged in 1928. You might find it helpful to listen to the last ten minutes or so of the podcast by his comments on which explores Sherriff's experiences in the army and suggests some of the real-life characters he had historian Michael Lucas, in mind while writing his play. From 14 minutes into the talk we have details of Sheriff's own war experiences, including his experience of neuralgia (from around 22 minutes). From 26 minutes, the talk explores the genesis of *Journey's End* and includes interesting comments from the playwright on the play and why it was a success.

http://media.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php/the-journeys-end-battalion-the-9th-east-surrey-and-r-c- sherriff-in-the-great-war/

Literary contexts

Realism

Using literary contexts should never be a matter of pigeonholing texts: contextual understanding is useful when it leads to a richer consideration of the text. Note how Payton explores the 'quaint' aspects of *Journey's End* as well as its modernist elements. Look, for example, at the language used by some characters in the play, which seems remote from that of today's audiences, many of whom might find public schoolboy terms such as 'rather' and 'topping' anachronistic and rather amusing. Note other aspects that place the play firmly within a classic realist tradition, such as the conventional structure, the use of time and the sheer sense of the play as seeming to evoke the real lives of those whom it depicts. You might note elements that are more than realistic. For example, you might want to consider the extent to which elements such as lighting and sound are used in symbolic ways.

Modernism

It is difficult to argue that the play is modernist in terms of its style: modernist texts are typically difficult texts that disrupt conventional uses of structure, narrative and time. For example, James Joyce's *Ulysses* narrates different chapters in different modes, often favouring a stream of consciousness style that seemingly represents the random thoughts of a character as he or she goes about the business of daily life. By contrast, *Journey's End* seems stylistically conventional. Yet if we consider the play's concerns — such as waiting and the absurdity of life, or at least life when viewed from the trenches — we can appreciate a certain modernist mode of thought. Why not reread Payton on Sheriff's modernism, then look up a good companion to literature to find out more about modernism before going back to the play and asking yourself to what extent it embodies typically modernist concerns?

Absurdist drama

One biographer, Antony Cronin, terms Samuel Beckett (a man who was not only a Nobel laureate but also won the Croix de Guerre (cross of war) for his work with the French resistance during the Second World War) the last modernist. Consider both Payton's ideas and what you discover about Beckett from the links below, then consider the extent to which you believe Beckett and Sheriff might have shared some of the same concerns.

The following article explores the popularity of Beckett's seminal play, *Waiting for Godot*, whose sense of waiting and the futility of waiting reminds Mark Payton of *Journey's End*: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-20889073

The following site promotes the 2015 production of *Happy Days* — the other Becket play to which Payton refers — in which a woman is buried up to her waist in sand. There is also a range of related links: http://www.youngvic.org/whats-on/happy-days

The following review from the *New York Times* is worth reading for its final paragraphs, which consider Sheriff as a precursor to Beckett:

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/22/theater/r-c-sherriffs-journeys-end-a-remembrance-of-war.html

Further reading

You can search YouTube for versions of the play, including the 1988 version by Michael Simpson and starring Mark Payton at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y98QdRmLfbQ

The British Library site contains a wealth of information about the First World War and there are many teaching packs for particular aspects of research, e.g. if you were researching a coursework essay comparing the presentation of leadership in *Journey's End* and another text, you might like to visit:

http://www.bl.uk/teaching-resources/historical-debates-leadership-and-command

Section 4 - How do class & power affect the soldiers' experiences of war?

Key questions	Core knowledge	Terminology & vocabulary	Discussion, reading & writing
Big questions: How do class and power affect the soldiers' experiences of war? **Key questions:** What social class are the different characters in *Journey's End*? Does Sherriff portray working class characters unsympathetically ?	Following the structure of previous weeks (recap, teach, process, check understanding) this weeks' lessons should focus on different aspects of class. The following prompts will help guide you on what to focus on: - Derogatory attitudes to Trotter (examine use of dialect) - Comic use of Mason as the cook highlighting the servant + middle class structures (Compare with the character of Baldrick in the extract on page 34 of the student workbook.) - The Sergeant Major's role (especially the interrogation of the German prisoner p. 77-8) - The Colonel – war is a game, removed from the reality, 'only following orders'. Do students blame the Colonel for the raid in which Osborne dies? How does he behave before and after the raid? How does Stanhope react to him? - Rugby—middle class sport & achievements - Raleigh and Osborne's conversation before going on the raid (p. 72-5) - Read the extract on 'Land girls' (p 36 of student booklet) what does this suggest about the social glass of those women who became land girls? - Read Madeline Ida Bradford's poem, 'Munition Wages' – what does this suggest about social class? Texts: - Blackadder 'Captain Cook' - Women's National Land Service Corps - 'Munitions Wages'	**Terminology** dialect social class Marxism **Vocabulary** **social class** **civil** **munitions** **inadequate** munitions	**Structured discussions**: How is class presented in *Journey's End*? **Couch to 5 k writing**: How do class and power affect the soldiers' experiences of war? Write a diary extract for either Trotter or Mason **Reading fluency**: Scenes from *Journey's End*

Expert knowledge

The main features of the Marxist theory of literature are that literature, like all forms of culture, is governed by specific historical conditions, and that literature, as a cultural product, is ultimately related to the economic base of society. According to Marxists, even literature itself is a social institution and has a specific ideological function, based on the background and ideology of the author. The English literary critic and cultural theorist Terry Eagleton defines Marxist criticism this way: "Marxist criticism is not merely a 'sociology of literature', concerned with how novels get published and whether they mention the working class. Its aim is to explain the literary work more fully; and this means a sensitive attention to its forms, styles and, meanings. But it also means grasping those forms, styles and meanings as the product of a particular history."

Annotated copies of texts from students' workbook

Extract from *Blackadder Goes Forth*, Episode One 'Captain Cook'[54]

George hands his helmet to Blackadder, who throws it up into the sky. Immediately heavy machine-gun fire is heard. He catches the helmet, which now has over 20 holes in it, and gives it back to George.

George: Yes, some sort of clever hat-camouflage might be in order.

Baldrick: Permission to speak sir.

Blackadder: Granted, with a due sense of exhaustion and dread.

Baldrick: I have a cunning plan to get us out of getting killed sir.

Blackadder: Ah yes, what is it?

Baldrick: Cooking.

Blackadder: I see. *[enters the dugout again]*

Baldrick: You know staff HQ is always on the lookout for good cooks? Well, we go over there, we cook 'em something, and get out of the trenches that way.[55]

Blackadder: Baldrick, it's a brilliant plan.

Baldrick: Is it?

Blackadder: Yes, it's superb.

Baldrick: *[delighted]* Permission to write home immediately sir, this is the first brilliant plan a Baldrick's ever had! For centuries we've tried, and they've always turned out to be total pig-swill. My mother will be as pleased as Punch.

Blackadder: Hm-hm, if only she were as good-looking as Punch, Baldrick. There is however one slight flaw in the plan.

Baldrick: Oh?

Blackadder: You're the worst cook in the entire world.

Baldrick: Oh yeah, that's right.

Blackadder: There are amoeba on Saturn who can boil a better egg than you. Your Filet Mignon in sauce Bernaise look like dog-turds in glue.[56]

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[54] Episode is available here: https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p00bf6md/blackadder-blackadder-goes-forth-1-plan-a-captain-cook - extract is from 4.23 – 7.00

[55] Explicit connection to Mason

[56] Compare to Mason's cooking (e.g. pages 9 & 59)

Baldrick: That's because they are.

Blackadder: Your plum-duff tastes like it's a molehill decorated with rabbit-droppings.

Baldrick: I thought you wouldn't notice.

Blackadder: Your cream custard has the texture of cat's vomit.[57]

Baldrick: Again it's…

Blackadder: If you were to serve one of your meals in staff HQ you'd be arrested for the greatest mass poisoning since Lucretia Borgia invited 500 of her close friends around for a wine-and-anthrax party. No, we'll have to think of a better plan than that.

Baldrick: Right, how about a nice meal, while you chew it over?

Blackadder: *[suspicious]* What's on the menu?

Baldrick: Rat. *[shows him a big black rat]* Sauté or fricassee.[58]

Blackadder: *[peers at the rat]* Oh, the agony of choice. Sauté involves...?

Baldrick: Well, you take the freshly shaved rat, and you marinade it in a puddle for a while.

Blackadder: Hmm, for how long?

Baldrick: Until it's drowned. Then you stretch it out under a hot light bulb, then you get within dashing distance of the latrine, and then you scoff it right down.

Blackadder: So that's sauteing, and fricasseeing?

Baldrick: Exactly the same, just a slightly bigger rat.

Blackadder: Well, call me Old Mr. Un-adventurous but I think I'll give it a miss this once.

1.

[57] Exaggerated – why is Mason's commentary on his cooking less exaggerated? Compare Blackadder's relationship with Baldrick with that of Stanhope and Mason. Is Mason afraid of Stanhope? (16-17)
[58] There's much evidence that soldiers did indeed eat rats. Ask students if they think this is true? What would conditions have to be like for this to happen?

Women's National Land Service Corps

This extract is taken from Mary Hillyer's first-hand account of life working as a Land Girl during World War 1, taken from Forgotten Voices of the Great War *by Max Arthur.*

When the war broke out, I had just left school. My father was a doctor in a small town in Somerset[59], and my mother was a perfect sweeties but a doormat really. When the war broke out I overheard them saying, 'Of course we shall have Mary with us for the war.' Well, Mary thought otherwise, and when I read in the paper about a course being opened at Sealham College for women who wanted to go on the land I decided that that was what I was going to do. I went off to the post office and removed my life savings of £12.10[60] and wrote to Sealham College. I was completely and utterly and absolutely innocent, as we all were on the course. I think we were fourteen of us to begin with and we joined the Women's National Land Service Corps. It wasn't the Land Army proper because women on the land were not recruited until the end of 1915.

Well, off I went to Sealham College. I remember looking on the board one morning and for my first job, I saw, 'Will Miss Hillyer please take a sow to the boar.' I overheard one of the other girls say, 'Oh well. She hasn't got far to go.' So I harnessed the sow with a halter and marched her down the road, then pooped her into a stable at the Boar Hotel. And I thought I had done my job rather well, but when I came back, of course, there was an almighty row.[61]

These girls were all from very good homes.[62] None of them knew quite why they wanted to go on the land, but they all realised that they did. We knew we'd earn no money[63], we just wanted to do it. At the end of the course we had to put our names down on the local labour exchange and I suppose I got unlucky, I got the last job left. The advertisement said: 'Farmer requires a Land Girl. Twelve cows to be milked twice a day. Forty head of cattle to be fed. Two hundred loads of mangels[64] to be drawn in. Calves to be fed, and if any time left, the milk to be separated.'

This was an isolated farm, 1,700 feet above the river between Dartmouth and Totnes – completely and utterly lonely. I got up at five every morning to milk those cows, never once in daylight. I separated the milk, then went into the farm and put a colossal faggot on the fire. The family then appeared and we had breakfast. I then went out and fed the cattle and did all the jobs of the day. One just went on doing it, very often until nine at night. I didn't realise what an enormous amount of work I did. I stuck at it for six months.[65]

[59] What does this tell us about her social class?
[60] This is about £1300 in today's money – also suggestive of class
[61] Compare this naivety to the speaker in 'Munition Wages'
[62] What does this imply? Why only girls from good homes?
[63] What sort of person can afford to earn nothing?
[64]Mangels - a beet of a variety with a large root, cultivated as stockfeed.
[65] People from different sections of society did not have the luxury of leaving after 6 months

Questions

1. What kind of work did the Land Girls do?
2. Describe what the working conditions were like?
3. What does Mary think “take the sow to the boar” means? What does it actually mean?
4. What does this mistake show about her life in 1914? What was her life like before she became a Land Girl?
5. Why did the girls want to do this work even though they were not paid?
6. How do you think these women helped change the roles of women in society?
7. How did these women help to break down class barriers?
8.

Madeline Ida Bedford, 'Munition Wages'

Earning high wages?
Yus, Five quid a week.
A woman, too, mind you,
I calls it dim sweet.

Ye'are asking some questions –
But bless yer, here goes:
I spends the whole racket
On good times and clothes.

Me saving? Elijah!
Yer do think I'm mad.
I'm acting the lady,
But – I ain't living bad.

I'm having life's good times.
See 'ere, it's like this:
The 'oof come o' danger,
A touch-and-go bizz.
We're all here today, mate,
Tomorrow – perhaps dead,
If Fate tumbles on us
And blows up our shed.

Afraid! Are yer kidding?
With money to spend!
Years back I wore tatters,
Now – silk stockings, mi friend!

I've bracelets and jewellery,
Rings envied by friends;
A sergeant to swank with,
And something to lend.

I drive out in taxis,
Do theatres in style.
And this is mi verdict –
It is jolly worth while.

Worth while, for tomorrow
If I'm blown to the sky,
I'll have repaid mi wages
In death – and pass by.

Stanzas 1-3

- Opening question make the poem conversational, as does the slang 'quid' 'ain't' and the attempt to convey accent 'yus' and 'dim' (damn)
- 'A woman too" suggest how good this money would have been for the time as well as highlighting the pay gap between the sexes.
- Despite the war, the motivation for the speaker is "good times" – contrast with earlier poems in the workbook.
- Rhyme scheme uses half rhymes 'week/sweet' and 'goes/clothes' – make it less formal, more authentic sounding
- 'acting the lady' hints at class issues – the wages allowed working class women to have a disposable income for the first time.

Stanzas 4-5

- 'danger' – the first hint that the work is risky: 'touch-and-go bizz' = risky business
- Fatalistic attitude "Tomorrow – perhaps dead".
- Fate is personified as clumsy 'tumbles' (could also suggest 'discovers')

Stanzas 6-7

- Money makes these dangers seem worthwhile "Are yer kidding?"
- Life before the war = "I wore tatters" – some people profit by war. What is the morality of the poem? Are silk stockings worth the death and danger?
- Being 'envied' is important – she's lucky!
- Her boyfriend is a sergeant (senior non-commissioned officer)

Stanzas 8-9

- Taxis and theatres are signs of conspicuous wealth and luxury
- She's explicit that the danger is 'jolly worth while"
- The risks of 'tomorrow' are irrelevant – she's living for today.
- What does "repaid mi wages/In death" suggest? Does she think she'll be punished for her attitude?
- Why doesn't she care?

Additional reading

Social class in Journey's End

BBC Bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/znpx382/revision/4

When Sherriff was writing Journey's End the social order would have been very different to nowadays. By juxtaposing the public school educated upper class officers with working class soldiers like Trotter and Mason, Sherriff wanted to show how war brought everyone together and that there were brave men from all strata of society.

The portrayal of the Colonel - and unseen superiors - suggests that Sherriff wants us to question the decisions and behaviour of the rich, privately educated men in charge of the war effort. While Sherriff does not mock them outright, he does give his audiences reasons to doubt those in power.

It has become a myth that World War One was badly planned by generals and politicians back home in the safety of London - the phrase 'lions led by donkeys' was often used to suggest this.

Some contend the massive loss of life on the front line is proof, but it is of course very difficult to judge without knowing exactly why certain decisions were made. The Colonel for example is noticeable by his absence, appearing on stage for only a short time despite his importance in the action of the play. He quickly suggests who should go on the raid, understatedly describing the matter as "a damn nuisance" but "necessary". This seems to trivialise the fact that he is sending men to their death. Afterwards - on receiving scant information from the German soldier captured during the raid that kills Osborne - the Colonel seems triumphant. He declares, "It's a feather in our cap, Stanhope." In this way he comes across as ambitious and uncaring about the men who have died because of his orders. Stanhope's sarcastic tone when he says "Still it'll be awfully nice if the brigadier's pleased" shows that he too is annoyed at the Colonel's dismissive attitude.

The pre-war class system

https://crossref-it.info/textguide/wilfred-owen-selected-poems/36/2550

Edwardian Britain (1901-10) maintained a society rooted in class differences:

- The top tier of this hierarchical society contained the monarchy, aristocracy and landed gentry, all of whom had private incomes. These 'upper' classes were educated in public schools such as Eton, Harrow and Winchester
- The next tier down was the broad and respectable band of the 'middle' classes, clearly differentiated into the upper-middle, middle-middle and lower-middle classes. From these social strata came those who provided the Empire and the country with many positions of responsibility, from colonial civil servants to town clerks, from business leaders to shop managers such as in Susan Owen's family, from major industrialists to railway officials like Tom Owen, from notable academics to school teachers, such as Wilfred Owen might have been
- 'Beneath' the middle classes were the labouring or 'lower' classes, who provided manual labour for manufacturing, trade, agriculture and in domestic service to the classes above. These too were differentiated into artisan, skilled and unskilled groups.

The levelling effect of war

In 1914 men volunteered to fight for God, King and Country from every level of this complex society.

Initially, the British Army reflected the prevailing social hierarchy. The officer class was recruited from the public schools of Britain. Soldiers were divided clearly between the privileged and well educated, whose social rank defined them as officers and gentlemen, and the private soldiers who were known simply as 'men.'

However, in 1916, when Lord Derby sought to replace the massive losses experienced at The Battle of the Somme, conscription drew men from all ranks of society. Officers came up through the ranks or were chosen from men of less elevated educational backgrounds, such as Owen.

Fighting side by side and sharing the same appalling conditions, people who would otherwise never have met socially started to appreciate one another as individuals. Many of the old class barriers and misunderstandings were, if not entirely abolished, certainly eroded.

The dignity of human life was equally recognised in every soldier. After the war ended, the Imperial War Graves commission further levelled the sense of class hierarchy, when every one of the fallen had their sacrifice commemorated on uniform stones in the war cemeteries across the world.

Journey's End, (review in the Socialist Worker)

https://socialistworker.co.uk/socialist-review-archive/journeys-end/

How do you swallow a war? You dilute it with long, dull slugs of peace. In fact, war is frequently so boring that soldiers long for the fighting to start. Their time is filled with the mundane. Call it a kind of humanitarian intervention.

Journey's End opens with a prolonged inspection of a sock. An officer holds it to a candle, viewing it from every angle, barely glancing at Lieutenant Osborne, the officer who has joined him in the First World War dugout. Osborne is fond of quoting Lewis Carroll: "'The time has come,' the Walrus said,/ 'To talk of many things:/ Of shoes – and ships – and sealing-wax – / Of cabbages and kings'." In other words, don't mention the war.

The denizens of the dugout in which this play is entirely set talk of many things. They chatter and gossip and banter, discuss the athletic abilities of the cockroaches that share their home, obsess about the food.

Second Lieutenant Trotter, the professional soldier among them, is especially good at that. Mason, the cook, is railed at for running out of pepper: "War is bad enough with pepper. Without pepper it's…bloody awful."

Trotter's pause is telling. For a moment he thinks of the war, the war without the pepper of everyday trivia. A war that's unspeakable. There is another stratagem for peppering the war. Captain Stanhope, a 20 year old military prodigy, numbs the pain with drink. In fact, the only way he can do what he does is by being constantly drunk.

R C Sherriff, later to make it as a screenwriter on films from The Invisible Man to The Dambusters, wrote Journey's End in 1928, based on his own experience in the killing fields of France. There has hardly been a sharper observation of life in the trenches.

Sherriff has been criticised for only writing about the officers, who must have had it easy compared to the ranks. It's a fair criticism and one Sherriff suggests that he agrees with by having a heroic young officer join the men for bread and cheese rather than stay for the chicken, champagne and cigars in the officers' mess. Still, even the officers are palpably gripped by fear, the horror threatening to erupt out of their conversations in a way that apparently inspired Harold Pinter.

Another criticism is that Journey's End doesn't analyse war. It merely describes it. But that doesn't mean it isn't anti-war. When Osborne is sent on a pointless raid on the German trenches he quietly, yet plainly, calls it murder.

Having said that, this production cops out with a final, sentimental tableau of remembrance. It should have ended a couple of minutes sooner. The officers in the dugout have been waiting for the German offensive of 21 March 1918. When it comes the stage is empty but the theatre is filled, the walls stretched, with terrible noise, the visceral din of war. On that day 38,000 British soldiers met their deaths.

That's war without the pepper.

To see how good Journey's End is, just look at who it's offended

https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/to-see-how-good-journey-s-end-is-just-look-at-who-it-s-offended

Robert Gore-Langton's Journey's End: the Classic War Play Explored considers R.C. Sherriff's continuing power to move - and to upset

'You have no idea,' wrote the publisher Ralph Hodder-Williams in 1929 to one of his authors, "what terrible offence *Journey's End* has given — and terrible pain too, which is a great deal more important. I think you will agree that the chronic alcoholic was extraordinarily rare.

He was referring to R.C. Sherriff's controversial tragedy of the trenches, which was then, 11 years after the war, enjoying an unexpected box-office success in the West End, where it played for nearly 600 performances.

Its success came as a surprise, not only because Sherriff (1896–1975) was an unknown writer, and exclusively male war plays were not particularly popular, but also because audiences were expected to sympathise with an unusual war hero. Stanhope is a young company commander, whose nerves by the time of the action are so shattered that he can only keep going with liberal doses of whisky. Hodder-Williams (a war veteran himself) was among those who dismissed this as sensational.

Army authorities, too, objected: they claimed that the play had seriously affected peacetime recruiting figures, contributing to a growing climate of disenchantment with military life. Its appearance, in the late 1920s, coincided with two of the greatest successes of first-world-war literature, *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *Goodbye to All That*. The message of these was that the war had been pointless, a colossal waste of young lives and built on deception. For many, *Journey's End* seemed to say the same thing, with the tragic death of Lieutenant Osborne, a father figure to the youths surrounding him; with Stanhope's alcoholism; and with the pathetic end of the boy-officer Raleigh, who had arrived at the Front with childish expectations of military glory.

Like much war literature in Britain that came after the Great War, however, the play's attitude to the conflict was ambiguous. In fact it exalted what were conventionally characterised as the 'military virtues' of courage and 'sticking it'; above all, Sherriff valued the companionship of the trenches, and for years afterwards attended his regiment's reunions.

Journey's End was anathema to Joan Littlewood, who, as producer of the satirical 1960s musical *Oh, What a Lovely War!,* set the tone for rubbishing the residual 'valiant hearts' patriotic sentiment about the Great War. In Littlewood's view, *Journey's End* not only glorified public-school values and poked fun at its working-class characters, such as the food-obsessed Lieutenant Trotter, but never questioned the war's purposes.

What is the secret of the play's success? Above all, though a writer of no intellectual pretensions or particular distinction, Sherriff was absolutely sincere, and the play reflected his experience, revisited to get it out of his system, as with many, such as Robert Graves, Siegfried Sassoon and Edmund Blunden. Unlike those writers he had no gift of poetic expression, but he conveyed how ordinary people talked and thought; and he had a turn for

drama. Nothing he wrote subsequently had the power of *Journey's End,* but — for example in *The Long Sunset*, his play about the last days of Roman civilisation in England — his build-up of suspense, as order and humanity break down, is chilling.

Educated at Kingston-on-Thames Grammar School, Sherriff was an insurance clerk when war broke out. He volunteered for the army, and in 1916 was commissioned in the 9th East Surrey Regiment. He saw active service over ten months until pulled out of the line wounded during the dreadful third battle of Ypres when a shell hit a nearby pillbox (the medics extracted over 50 pieces of concrete from his face and body).

As a soldier, Sherriff seems to have been responsible and competent and as nervous of failing in his duty as of enemy shells; he was obsessed for months with containing fear, which was to be one of the principal themes of *Journey's End*. A photograph taken of him in 1916 is revealing of his character — gentle, straightforward, sensitive, guarded. What it does not show is his sense of humour, evident not so much in *Journey's End* as in other works such as the novel *A Fortnight in September*. *Journey's End* made him rich, and his career as a novelist, playwright and scriptwriter prospered on and off; but he was always modest and self-effacing, and died in relative obscurity.https://offers.spectator.co.uk/offer/a821d

Robert Gore-Langton presents an attractive picture of Sherriff, whose papers he has studied exhaustively in the Surrey Record Office. An experienced drama critic, he is particularly illuminating on the theatrical history of the play. In a final chapter he traces the changes in interpretation with each major revival of *Journey's End* since the 1950s. He ends with the 2011 West End production, directed by David Grindley, who is quoted at length, discovering profundities in the clownish Lieutenant Trotter, and demonstrating that despite Sherriff's conservative adherence to values rooted in Edwardian England, the play, in the hands of a penetrating director, still has new things to tell a 21st-century audience. No other British play about the Great War by a veteran has supplanted it.

Section 5 - What does it mean to be heroic?

Key questions	Core knowledge	Terminology & vocabulary	Discussion, reading & writing
Big question: What does it mean to be heroic? **Key questions:** Is Stanhope a tragic hero? Who is the most courageous character? Is *Journey's End* a tragedy? What is Stanhope's error of judgement?	- Obsessed about the minutiae (food, worms, earth) - Stage directions & sunlight - The home front (opening Act 2) - Concept of time, how the characters cope - Reluctant hero—Stanhope/alcohol: he frets that he is not really a hero, because he nightly drowns his cowardice in whisky, but we may generously pronounce that he is really heroic because he continues to fight his cowardice rather than agreeing to be invalided out of the trenches. Stanhope's heroism is not merely a personal ideal, which anchors his character in a chaotic world, but it is also a means of manipulating the men under his command. He effectively declares that, 'I have sacrificed my life for the good of the regiment and therefore you should too.' - Cowardice—Hibbert/Stanhope conversation (p 55-6) - Osborne—no thought for himself (p 59) Texts: - Cowardice white feather, Harold Carter - A Brass Hat in No Man's Land—cowardice and bravery - Wilfred Owen, 'Futility' - BBC adaptation of JE (10 mins) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxCHp_GMbi4&ab_channel=EdwardPetherbridge	**Terminology** tragedy hero catharsis hamartia **Vocabulary** **futility** **fatuous** **chaotic** **denial**	**Structured discussions**: Who is the most courageous of the characters? **Couch to 5 k writing**: What does it mean to be heroic? Write a letter nominating one of the characters for a Military Cross **Reading fluency**: Sections from Journey's End

Expert knowledge

The tragic hero, defined in Aristotle's Poetics as "an intermediate kind of personage, not pre-eminently virtuous and just" whose misfortune is attributed, not to vice or depravity, but an error of judgment."

The hero of a tragedy must evoke a sense of pity and fear within the audience. In essence, the focus of the hero should not be the loss of his goodness. He establishes the concept that pity is an emotion that must be elicited when, through his actions, the character receives undeserved misfortune, while the emotion of fear must be felt by the audience when they contemplate that such misfortune could possibly befall themselves in similar situations. Aristotle explains such change of fortune "should be not from bad to good, but, reversely, from good to bad." Such misfortune is visited upon the tragic hero "not through vice or depravity but by some error of judgment." This error, or hamartia, refers to a flaw in the character of the hero, or a mistake made by the character.

Aristotle's tragic heroes are flawed individuals who commit, without evil intent, great wrongs or injuries that ultimately lead to their misfortune, often followed by tragic realization of the true nature of events that led to this destiny.[3] This means the hero still must be – to some degree – morally grounded. The usual irony in Greek tragedy is that the hero is both extraordinarily capable and highly moral and it is these exact, highly-admirable qualities that lead the hero into tragic circumstances. The tragic hero is snared by his own greatness: extraordinary competence, a righteous passion for duty, and (often) the arrogance associated with greatness (hubris).

Annotated copies of texts from students' workbook

A Brass Hat in No Man's Land

Inside the little garden on the other side of the wall, not ten yards distant from the centre of the line, the victim is carried to the stake. He is far too drunk to walk.[66] He is out of view save from myself, as I stand on a mound near the wall. As he is produced I see he is practically lifeless and quite unconscious.[67] He has already been bound with ropes. There are hooks on the post; we always do things thoroughly in the Rifles. He is hooked on like dead meat in a butcher's shop.[68] His eyes are bandaged – not that it really matters, for he is already blind. The men of the firing party pick up their rifles, one of which is unloaded, on a given sign. On another sign they come to the *Present* and, on the lowering of a handkerchief by the officer, they fire – a volley rings out – a nervous ragged volley it is true, yet a volley. Before the fatal shots are fired I had called the battalion to attention. There is a pause, I wait. I see the medical officer examining the victim. He makes a sign, the subaltern strides forward, a single shot rings out.[69] Life is now extinct. We march back to breakfast while the men of a certain company pay the last tribute at the graveside of an unfortunate comrade.[70] This is war.[71]

To this sad story there was a sequel. Some months later one of my officers was on leave, and as he had recently been awarded the D.S.O.[72] was entertained to luncheon by his Club. At the function there were present some young business men who had not volunteered for war service. One of these asked my officer if it were true that 'one of your men had been executed for desertion, and if so did he not think it was a very discreditable affair for the battalion and a disgrace to the city?' 'Well,' my officer replied, 'the unfortunate man volunteered to serve his country in the field; you have not done even that yet. He went through the trials of a truly terrible winter in the trenches. He endured bombardment, mud, exposure, cold, frost, trench-feet, sleepless nights and daily drudgery under conditions in which man was never intended to play a part (he had to play a part the whole time to keep going at all). This quite unnatural test broke his spirit. His brain was probably affected. In despair he quitted the line. Why don't you and your other slacking and profiteering friends join up and have a shot at doing better than this unhappy comrade of ours? If you can't stand the test and are executed because you are not endowed with the steel-like qualities which make for war efficiency, I shall think better of you than I do now. Our dead comrade, whom we had to kill with our own hands and rifles *pour encourager les autres*[73], is a hero compared with you! He tried and failed. He died for such as you! Isn't it time you had a shot at dying for your country?'[74]

Questions

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[66] Completely passive. Why drunk? Also, what does the word 'victim' suggest?
[67] Is it fair to shoot him?
[68] What does this description remind students of? Think about Ian Beck's short story
[69] Why does this happen?
[70] What does this suggest about the soldier who has been shot?
[71] Is it? Sounds like execution. Why is this justifiable in war?
[72] Distinguished Service Order
[73] *pour encourager les autres* – for the encouragement of others
[74] Is this fair? Do we have a moral duty to volunteer in times of war? Or is the officer angry at the hypocrisy of the question he was asked?

1. In paragraph 1, what evidence is there that the battalion and commanding officer pity the soldier being shot?

2. In paragraph 2, what does the commander say about the dead soldier that suggests he has sympathy for what the soldier experienced?

3. In what way is the businessman more of a coward that the dead soldier?

4. What does this extract suggest about heroism?

Private Harold Carter - diary extract

I came home on leave from Ypres for four days. I got home, knocked at the door, and as they opened it I walked in and Mother rushed up as soon as she heard my voice. She was so pleased to see me she threw her arms around my neck and kissed me. Then she said. "What's all this crawling about all over you?" I said, "Well, mother, they're lice. Don't worry," I said, but she was horrified. Of course, she never dreamt that conditions were such out there.[75] I told her I'd have a wash down and dig out my civvy suit. Later on they asked me questions about what it was like over the other side but I didn't tell them too much. I didn't like to pile the agony on them at home. They knew that I'd had a rough time by looking at me – they didn't want telling twice.[76]

On the Saturday I went to a music hall in civilian clothes and as I lined up outside a lady came along and put a white feather into my hand.[77] I looked at it and felt disgusted, but there wasn't much I could do about it. I felt small enough over the white feather incident outside, but as I went into the gallery a chap came out in naval uniform – he might have been a petty officer – and said that no girl should be sitting with a chap unless he was in uniform. No man should be out of uniform, he went on – if he was out of uniform he was nothing more than a worm and a skunk. He made me feel about as big as a worm. I just sat there, on my own, while people looked at me and I looked at them. I should have liked to jump up and told them I'd just come out of the trenches at Ypres, but I couldn't.[78] I had to take it, and I came out disgusted and went home.

Questions

1. What can we infer about conditions in the trenches at Ypres?

2. What does the white feather signify?

3. How is Harold Carter made to feel like he's a coward?

4. What does this extract suggest about cowardice?

[75] Why didn't she know? Think about Jessie Pope's poem
[76] 'Stiff upper lip' – was he right to conceal the truth?
[77] What does this represent? What sort of woman would do this? Is this hypocritical?
[78] Why couldn't he? Why did he have to "take it"?

Mine Eyes Have Seen

Alice Dunbar-Nelson

Teaching notes:

Written in the final year of World War I, Alice Dunbar-Nelson's *Mine Eyes Have Seen* was published in *The Crisis*, a journal founded by W.E.B. Du Bois as a platform for the NAACP. In a manufacturing city somewhere in the Northern United States, an African-American family has been destroyed by violence and racism. A man was lynched and his wife died of heartbreak leaving their three children to fend for themselves. The children are now young adults, but Lucy, the youngest, and Dan, the oldest, are disabled and reliant on their brother, Chris, to support them. When Chris comes home from work with the news that he has been drafted, their livelihood is in jeopardy. However, Chris decides he must stay to support his siblings and, on top of that, he doesn't want to serve a country that has done nothing but beat down and destroy his people--the black citizens of America. Dan vehemently disagrees with Chris's decision and when their Jewish friend, an Irish widow, a veteran of the war, Chris's sweetheart, and a settlement worker show up to their home, the discussion intensifies as they all give their opinions regarding race and duty to one's country.

- **Mine Eyes of Seen** – first line from the song The Bartle Hymn of the Republic, a popular American patriotic song written by the abolitionist writer Julia Ward Howe in 1861.
- **Pneumonia** - an infection that inflames the air sacs in one or both lungs
- **The Somme** - The Battle of the Somme, also known as the Somme offensive, was a battle of the First World War fought by the British and French against Germany. It took place between 1 July and 18 November 1916 on both sides of the upper reaches of the Somme, a river in France. The battle was intended to hasten a victory for the Allies. More than three million men fought in the battle and one million men were wounded or killed, making it one of the deadliest battles in human history.
- **Palestine** - The British invasion of Ottoman-held Palestine in 1917–18 was the third campaign launched by the British against the Ottoman Turks in the Middle East in the First World War. It built on the advances made in Mesopotamia (Iraq) and the Sinai in 1916.
- **Alps** - The White War is the name given to the fighting in the high-altitude Alpine sector of the Italian front during the First World War. More than two-thirds of this conflict zone lies at an altitude above 2,000m. In 1917 New York World correspondent E. Alexander Powell wrote: "On no front, not on the sun-scorched plains of Mesopotamia, nor in the frozen Mazurian marshes, nor in the blood-soaked mud of Flanders, does the fighting man lead so arduous an existence as up here on the roof of the world."
- **Deuce of Spades** – Ace of Spades
- **Socialist meetings** – a good opportunity to introduce the concept of socialism in advance of teaching *An Inspector Calls*
- **Mrs O'Neill** – compare the Irish accent in which Mrs O'Neill speaks with the speech of the other characters – why do you think she's presented in this way?

- **Jews in Russia** - The term 'pogrom' entered the English language as a descriptive term for 19th- and 20th-century attacks on Jews that occurred in the Russian Empire. Similar attacks against Jews which also occurred at other times and places retrospectively became known as pogroms. The characteristics of a pogrom vary widely, depending on the specific incident, at times leading to, or culminating in, massacres.
- **1776 –** The American Revolutionary War, also known as the Revolutionary War or American War of Independence, secured a United States of America independent from Great Britain. Fighting began on April 19, 1775, followed by the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 177
- **1812** - The War of 1812 was a conflict fought by the United States of America and its indigenous allies against Great Britain and its allies in British North America
- **1861** - The American Civil War was a civil war in the United States fought between the Union and the Confederacy. The central cause of the war was the status of slavery, especially the expansion of slavery into territories acquired as a result of the Louisiana Purchase and the Mexican–American War
- **1898** - The Spanish–American War was an armed conflict between Spain and the United States. Hostilities began in the aftermath of the internal explosion of USS Maine in Havana Harbor in Cuba, leading to U.S. intervention in the Cuban War of Independence.
- **Carrizal** - The Battle of Carrizal occurred on the June 21, 1916. It was a major skirmish between United States Army troops of General John J. Pershing's Punitive Expedition and Carrancista troops fought at the town of Carrizal in the Mexican state of Chihuahua.
- **Crucified children** - this refers to the widespread atrocity propaganda story of an Allied soldier who may have been crucified with bayonets on a barn door or a tree, while fighting on the Western Front during World War I. Three witnesses said they saw an unidentified crucified Canadian soldier near the battlefield of Ypres on or around 24 April 1915, but there was no conclusive proof such a crucifixion actually occurred. The eyewitness accounts were somewhat contradictory, no crucified body was found, and no knowledge was uncovered at the time about the identity of the supposedly crucified soldier.

- Another sonnet – although this has an unusual structure of 2 7-line stanzas – this suggests the meaning and emphasis will be equally divided between both stanzas. Is that true?
- Stanza 1 focusses on the sun and the

Futility, Wilfred Owen

Move him into the sun—
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields half-sown.
Always it woke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow.
If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know.

Think how it wakes the seeds—
Woke once the clays of a cold star.
Are limbs, so dear-achieved, are sides
Full-nerved, still warm, too hard to stir?
Was it for this the clay grew tall?
—O what made fatuous sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all?[79]

Questions

1. What has occurred just before the poem begins?
2. What scene do you visualize at the opening of the poem?
3. Who is speaking? What is his relation to “him”?
4. To whom is he speaking in line 1?
5. Why does the speaker want “him” moved into the sun?
6. What reasons does the speaker give for thinking the sun will help?
7. What are the connotations of “sun”? “snow”? “clay”?
8. What does “fatuous” mean? Why is the sun described as fatuous?
9. Rhythm: How should we read the second stanza? What effect do the many hyphens have on the tempo of our reading?
10. How does the title relate to the theme?

[79] More online analysis here:
https://poemanalysis.com/wilfred-owen/futility/
https://www.litcharts.com/poetry/wilfred-owen/futility

Additional reading

Courage and cowardice in Journey's End

Journey's End is at heart about how men deal with almost certain death, constant fear, sudden and intense horror, attack and maiming. The play touched the hearts and minds of audiences watching only a decade after the war had been fought. The men all deal with the horrors of war differently and Sheriff uses each character to show the various things soldiers did to cope.

We are immediately made aware of Stanhope's drinking problem in the opening dialogue between Osborne and Hardy, who asks if Stanhope is "drinking like a fish as usual?" It becomes clear throughout the play that Stanhope is a brave soldier and a courageous leader. However, he uses alcohol to give him 'Dutch courage' - a term believed to have originated in a much earlier war because of soldiers' reliance on Dutch gin to prepare them for the horrors of battle. Stanhope himself admits that after "that awful affair on Vimy Ridge … There were only two ways of breaking the strain. One was pretending I was ill – and going home; the other was this." The stage directions tell us he "holds up his glass" as he says this. Is Sheriff suggesting that remaining courageous in the face of unbelievable fear and horror always comes at a cost?

Raleigh's boyish patriotic myth of the hero as some kind of knight in shining armour - and his "hero-worship" of Stanhope - introduces us to the concept of heroism. Supporting the war effort and fighting for one's country was glorified by propaganda and poets such as Jesse Pope, who painted a romantic picture of the heroes doing their duty for England. This led to soldiers and officers being pressurised to live up to the expectation of heroism.

We see that Stanhope's real fear is that his reputation back home as a 'hero' will be ruined if anyone finds out about his alcoholism. This is shown in the desperate way he "clutches Raleigh's wrist and tears the letter from his hand" – a letter which could reveal the truth about his drinking to his girlfriend, Madge. His really heroic acts - like volunteering for the raid - are juxtaposed with his alcoholism to show the cost of true bravery.

Juxtaposed with Stanhope's brave attitude to his duty is Hibbert, who decides to attempt what Stanhope says is the other alternative to "break the strain". Hibbert chooses "pretending to be ill". His situation shows us what focusing on death can do to the nerves and health. Stanhope however refuses to believe Hibbert and talks him round to staying, at one stage threatening him with execution for desertion. Stanhope's opinions of Hibbert range from "artful little swine" to "repulsive little mind". It is never made clear if Hibbert is just a coward or if he has a real mental illness, but his fear is shown through his dialogue and the stage directions. Here Sherriff uses verbs such as "quivering" and "trembling", as well as "timidly" to describe him.

Osborne bravely accepts his fate when told he is to join the raid. But his advice to naïve Raleigh to "Think of it all as - as romantic. It helps" suggests he too realises Raleigh would do well to continue glorifying the war, as the reality can be too much to bear.

Osborne himself seems to use similar tactics when he reads a childhood book - *Alice in Wonderland* - for comfort while waiting for the raid to start. In showing the tactics men employ to stay strong and courageous, Sheriff subtly conveys the fear they try not to show.

Sherriff also uses contrasts in physical descriptions to build up the audience's perception of heroic characters. For example, when the tall and slim Stanhope first appears on set he is with chubby red-faced Trotter. This emphasises the heroic physical attributes of Stanhope and helps us to understand the boyish love Raleigh has for him. Hibbert's desire to leave and his pretence of illness is contrasted with the heroic perseverance of Stanhope who has "never had a rest" according to Osborne. However, Sherriff also uses these contrasts to show how the men suffer to stay brave - the contrast of Trotter's addiction to food with Stanhope's addiction to alcohol is used to show how everyone uses crutches to deal with the horrors of war.

They may choose different things to help them cope, but in the end everyone finds their own way of "breaking the strain". Stanhope - like Sherriff himself - has been awarded a Military Cross for bravery and so has received the official hero's reward. The Colonel promises Raleigh an MC for taking part in the raid. The fact that he dies in battle a short while later shows the futility of such medals.

However, we can look at the deaths of men like Raleigh and Osborne as futile in one way, but agree that doing what they thought was their duty - voluntarily in Osborne's case because of his age - was heroic. Their superiors may have orchestrated the battles and riots, but it was the brave officers who put their lives in danger and died.

Trotter portrays another version of a hero. He is a working class officer who copes with the strain by eating too much and talking of down to earth pleasures such as his garden. Despite his lower class status, he is made second in command after the death of Osborne.

This shows Stanhope's trust in his ability and loyalty. The last we see of Trotter is when he "disappears into the dark" as the battle commences. Then Stanhope receives a message from him in the closing scene, summoning him to "come at once". We assume that he is killed. Trotter may not be the conventional ex-public school pupil that we have come to understand as heroic, but his bravery helps us to question our own perception of just what a hero is.

Fear and Coping in Journey's End

All of the soldiers in *Journey's End* find different ways to cope with their fear. In fact, their responses to fear can be broken into three categories: acceptance, denial, and evasion. In general, the most emotionally stable characters are those who accept their situation. These are people like **Osborne** and **Raleigh**, who acknowledge their own fear and unfortunate circumstances, but still bravely carry out their soldierly duties. **Stanhope**, on the other hand, tries to stifle (and thus deny) his own fear by drinking heavily, while **Hibbert** tries to escape the war altogether by lying about various ailments. However, the soldiers best able to handle fear (like Osborne and Raleigh) also end up meeting the worst fate, whereas the least brave characters (like Stanhope and Hibbert) apparently escape unscathed. In this way, Sherriff intimates that although fear and cowardice are generally not seen as desirable traits, they are perhaps appropriate reactions to the gruesomely violent circumstances of war. In other words, the coping mechanisms that actually might help someone get through war are not necessarily those lauded in everyday life.

Soldiers like Osborne and Raleigh don't like their circumstances, but they learn to generally accept that they must live under the constant threat of death. Indeed, they do what they can to normalize their situations. When Raleigh first arrives, he talks with Osborne about his journey to the battlefront, a journey that took him through a number of underground passageways and trenches. On his way, he looked up and saw the flares known as Very lights—lights sent into the air by soldiers to track their enemies during the night. Despite the ominous nature of the Very lights, both Raleigh and Osborne mentally reframe them to make them less frightening. "There's something rather romantic about it all," Osborne says of the lit-up night sky. "Yes," Raleigh agrees. "I thought that, too." In this moment, the audience sees Osborne and Raleigh's ability to reframe parts of the war, shifting their attitudes so they can deal with otherwise terrifying circumstances. Thinking of the Very lights as "romantic" ultimately enables them to ignore—or at least not focus on—ominous notions of violence and death. Simply put, they make the best of their situation.

Stanhope's response to fear represents the second category of coping mechanisms: denial. Everyone in his infantry sees him as a brave captain, but in reality he's just as scared and upset as everyone else, if not more so. The night Osborne—Stanhope's close friend and second-in-command—dies in action, Stanhope parties the night away, eating special foods and encouraging his men to join him in drinking champagne and whiskey. Raleigh, who can't bring himself to participate in the festivities, eventually asks Stanhope how he can eat and drink so heartily after Osborne's death. "To forget, you little fool—to forget!" Stanhope shouts. "You think there's no limit to what a man can bear?" With this exclamation, Stanhope straightforwardly reveals how he gets through the war: he searches for distractions in order to "forget" the terrible things that have happened (and that *will* happen). He recognizes that there are "limit[s] to what a man can bear," and so he turns to superficial diversions as a way of moving forward.

Like Stanhope, Officer Hibbert has a hard time accepting his circumstances. Rather than drinking, though, he tries to lie his way out of the military by claiming he has a bad case of neuralgia (nerve pain). This is more of an evasive tactic than a coping mechanism, something Hibbert uses so that he doesn't *have* to face his fear at all. When Hibbert says he needs to

leave on account of his pain, Stanhope tries to force him to stay. “Stanhope!” Hibbert pleads. “I’ve tried like hell…Ever since I came out here I’ve hated and loathed it. Every sound up there makes me all—cold and sick. I’m different to—to the others—you don’t understand.” With this, Hibbert reveals that his neuralgia excuse is just that: an excuse. The true reason he’s trying to leave is that he “hates” the trenches. When he tries to maintain that he’s “different to the others,” Stanhope objects. “I feel the same—exactly the same!” he says. “Why didn’t you tell me instead of talking about neuralgia?” After saying this, he encourages Hibbert to drink some whiskey. This, he upholds, is the only thing that enables him to keep from going crazy. In a separate conversation with Osborne about his first few years in the military, Stanhope even confesses: “There was only two ways of breaking the strain. One was pretending I was ill—and going home; the other was this. [*He holds up his glass*.]” Taken in conjunction with his conversation with Hibbert, this solidifies the fact that Stanhope actively uses alcohol as a coping mechanism, suggesting that the only difference between someone like him and someone like Hibbert is that he’s willing to numb himself to the world in order to preserve his ability to go on functioning despite his fear.

Of all the characters in *Journey’s End*, Osborne and Raleigh are perhaps the most emotionally well-balanced. They don’t use alcohol as a psychological crutch, and they don’t adopt escapist attitudes. However, they’re also the only two characters in the play to die. While Sherriff certainly doesn’t condemn their bravery, there’s no overlooking the fact that none of the other characters lose their lives over the course of the play. It’s only to be expected, then, that the audience might wonder if Osborne and Raleigh’s brave response to their dismal situation is almost unnatural, since it involves an acceptance of the unnatural violence of war. Although the positive attitude they display is sought after and praised in the military, it also is what leads them into danger, since their willingness to carry out their duties is what encourages a colonel to choose them as the only two men fit to lead a particularly risky raid on the German trenches. In a sense, then, their acceptance of their own fear only invites more violence and danger into their lives. The fact that they are the only characters to die ultimately calls into question what kind of response is appropriate when it comes to war and fear. Responding level-headedly to the insanity of violence, Sherriff intimates, is unnatural, whereas acting out of self-preservation is a natural and beneficial human instinct—even if doing so makes a person appear dysfunctional or cowardly.

What World War I taught us about PTSD

https://theconversation.com/what-world-war-i-taught-us-about-ptsd-105613

People often experience trauma during war. Over time, this can develop into a condition we now recognise as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Sufferers can experience severe anxiety, flashbacks, nightmares, insomnia and anger, amongst other symptoms.

It has a long history. Cases of PTSD have been identified from descriptions in ancient Greek history of people experiencing persistent nightmares. Other symptoms, such as feeling anxious and constantly on edge, were described as "soldier's heart" during the American Civil War. But this history took a sharp turn a hundred years ago, during World War I, when the prevalence of what was then known as "shell-shock" meant that a formal treatment for psychological trauma was needed.

Psychological trauma experienced during the war had an unprecedented toll on veterans, many of whom suffered symptoms for the rest of their lives. These ranged from distressing memories that veterans found difficult to forget, to extreme episodes of catatonia and terror when reminded of their trauma. The sheer scale of veterans experiencing such symptoms after World War I led to the definition of "combat stress reaction", informing our modern concept of PTSD.

The public perception of PTSD is still rooted in this past, and some of the problems discovered during World War I regarding psychological trauma have not yet been answered. Though much has changed, many principles and challenges of PTSD treatment were first identified during World War I. If we are to learn lessons from the war and better acknowledge the sacrifices of those who served, we must also acknowledge the impact of psychological trauma, both then and now.

Shell-shock

Soldiers described the effects of trauma as "shell-shock" because they believed them to be caused by exposure to artillery bombardments. As early as 1915, army hospitals became inundated with soldiers requiring treatment for "wounded minds", tremors, blurred vision and fits, taking the military establishment entirely by surprise. An army psychiatrist, Charles Myers, subsequently published observations in the Lancet, coining the term shell-shock. Approximately 80,000 British soldiers were treated for shell-shock over the course of the war. Despite its prevalence, experiencing shell-shock was often attributed to moral failings and weaknesses, with some soldiers even being accused of cowardice.

But the concept of shell-shock had its limitations. Despite coining the term, Charles Myers noted that shell-shock implied that one had to be directly exposed to combat, even though many suffering from the condition had been exposed to non-combat related trauma (such as the threat of injury and death). Cognitive and behavioural symptoms of trauma, such as nightmares, hyper-vigilance and avoiding triggering situations, were also overlooked compared to physical symptoms.

Today, it is these cognitive and behavioural symptoms that define PTSD. The physical symptoms that defined shell-shock are often consequences of these nonphysical symptoms.

Treating shell-shock

Treatments were harsh. As depicted in Pat Barker's novel Regeneration, shell-shock patients could receive courses of electroshock therapy and physical conditioning, with the aim of alleviating physical symptoms quickly.

Not only were such treatments brutal, they were typically ineffective, with 80% of those treated unable to serve again. They were very commonly used to treat physical symptoms such as fits and tremors, as shown in the video below. While the man in the video is shown walking again, it is unknown if psychological symptoms were alleviated.

Due to the ineffectiveness of prescribed treatments, many soldiers who had witnessed trauma or experienced shell-shock attempted to self-medicate their symptoms. Alcohol and drug use were common methods to treat immediate symptoms, much like Captain Stanhope's use of alcohol to cope with the onset of anxiety in the novel Journey's End. While prevalent, self-medication undoubtedly exacerbated untreated cognitive symptoms, such as flashbacks and nightmares, as is commonly found with PTSD today.

But some shell-shock treatments were highly effective: those that focused on the cognitive and behavioural symptoms now associated with PTSD. One army physician, Arthur Hurst, went to great lengths to encourage shell-shock patients to reconstruct their traumatic experiences, using films and simulations to help confront their traumatic memories. These "talking cures", which emphasised the cognitive and behavioural symptoms of trauma, had a much better success rate. Although used rarely during the war, many modern PTSD treatments can trace their development to these talking therapies, moving away from only treating physical symptoms and targeting psychological issues, such as distress caused by traumatic memories.

Trauma and PTSD today

Though the concept of shell-shock shares many features with PTSD, ideas of what constitutes trauma and treatments have since changed dramatically. The focus towards treating underlying cognitive and behavioural symptoms has shown a great reduction in the physical consequences of trauma observed during World War I. Service personnel are routinely screened for symptoms of trauma before and after deployment; identifying issues early reduces the risk of developing PTSD, whereas shell-shock treatment focused on treating symptoms once they became severe.

Nevertheless, many of the same challenges observed a century ago are equally relevant today. The stigma attached to mental illness still obstructs people from receiving treatment, causing many to self-medicate with alcohol to ease their symptoms instead. Such challenges are not unique to veterans either; refugees and sexual assault survivors are also deeply affected by trauma, but often face barriers to receiving proper treatment, exacerbating their PTSD.

Overall, we have a better understanding of what trauma is because of World War I. Although modern treatments for PTSD are more effective than those for shell-shock, issues such as social stigma and alcohol misuse remain. These are lessons from World War I we are still learning. We must not forget the challenges facing service personnel exposed to trauma, both today and a century ago.

Section 6 - Comradeship

Key questions	Core knowledge	Terminology & vocabulary	Discussion, reading & writing
Big questions: Are there ever times when orders should be disobeyed? Are there times when intimacy is more needed than others? **Key questions:** What examples of comradeship are there in *Journey's End*?	- Focus on A 3 S1, particularly the exchanges between Osborne and Raleigh (p 70-6) - Effects of the raid (before and after) How is Stanhope affected? (When Colonel tells him to choose who to lead the raid p 52-3; when S tells Osborne p 59-60; immediately before p 68-70, and after p 79-80) - Sinking sun (p 66)—metaphor/stage directions, when R & O leave dug-out (p 76) - Colonel and report (p 55) more important than men - Escapism (home) and distractions, countdown to raid - Treatment of the enemy—German boy - Intimacy/human contact (running motif—uncle/parent figure) - Stage directions/brothel (p 77) - Tucking Stanhope in (p 34) Texts: - All Quiet on the Western Front - Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*	**Terminology** symbolism theme **Vocabulary** **subvert** **ambivalent** **authority** **persisting** conscription valour propaganda	**Structured discussions**: Which character is the best example of comradeship? **Couch to 5 k writing**: Should Stanhope disobey orders? Write a description of battle in which Raleigh is injured. What does *Journey's End* suggest about whether it is right to follow orders? **Reading fluency**: *Mine Eyes Have Seen*

Expert knowledge

All Quiet on the Western Front is a novel by Erich Maria Remarque, a German veteran of World War I. The book describes the German soldiers' extreme physical and mental stress during the war, and the detachment from civilian life felt by many of these soldiers upon returning home from the front. The phase "all quiet of the Wester front" has come to mean stagnation or lack of change. The phrase comes from the final passage of the book. When Paul is killed, we receive two brief sentences detailing his fate. They are: "He fell in October, 1918, on a day that was so quiet and still on the whole front, that the army report confined itself to the single sentence: all quiet on the Western Front."

The theme of comradeship is explored in The Epic of Gilgamesh and Hamlet. (https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/eng2800hmwa2015fall/?p=464)

Annotated copies of texts from students' workbook

Good-bye To All That

What happened in the next few minutes is difficult for me now to sort out. It was more difficult still at the time. All we heard back there in the sidings was a distant cheer confused crackle of rifle-fire, yells, heavy shelling on our front line, more shouts and yells and a continuous rattle of machine-guns.

After a few minutes, lightly-wounded men of the Middlesex came stumbling down Maison Rouge Alley to the dressing-station. I was at the junction of the siding and the alley. 'What's happened? What's happened?' I asked. 'Bloody balls-up' was the most detailed answer I could get. Among the wounded were a number of men yellow-faced and choking, with their buttons tarnished green; these were gas cases. Then came the stretcher cases. Maison Rouge Alley was narrow and the stretchers had difficulty in getting down. The Germans started shelling it with five-point-nines.

Thomas went through the shelling to battalion headquarters to ask for orders. It was the same place that I had visited on my first night in the trenches. This group of dug-outs in the reserve line showed very plainly from the air as battalion headquarters, and should never have been occupied on the day of a battle. Just before Thomas arrived the Germans put five shells into it. The adjutant jumped one way, the colonel another, the regimental sergeant major a third. One shell went into the signals dug-out and destroyed the telephone. The colonel had a slight wound on his hand; he joined the stream of wounded and was carried as far as the base with it. The adjutant took charge.

All this time A Company had been waiting in the siding for the rum to arrive; the tradition of every attack was a double tot of rum beforehand. All the other companies got it except ours. The Actor was cursing: 'Where the bloody hell's that storeman gone?' We fixed bayonets in readiness to go up to the attack as soon as Thomas came back with orders. The Actor sent me along the siding to the other end of the company. The stream of wounded was continuous. At last Thomas's orderly appeared, saying: 'Captain's orders, sir: A Company to move up to the front line.'

It seems that at that moment the storeman appeared with the rum. He was hugging the rum-bottle, without rifle or equipment, red-faced and retching. He staggered up to The Actor and said: 'There you are, sir,' then fell on his face in the thick mud of a sump-pit at the junction of the trench and the siding. The stopper of the bottle flew out and what was left of the three gallons bubbled on the ground. The Actor said nothing. It was a crime deserving the death-penalty. He put one foot on the storeman's neck, the other in the small of his back, and trod him into the mud. Then he gave the order 'Company forward.' The company went forward with a clatter of steel over the body, and that was the last heard of the storeman.

All Quiet on the Western Front

It's important to point out that Remarque's novel, published in the same year as Journey's End, is translated from German and, like JE, was extremely popular selling 2.5 million copies in its first 18 months in print. In 1930 it was banned and burned by the Nazis as anti-German.

The shelling has stopped. I turn back to the crater and wave to the others.[80] They scramble up and tear off their masks. We pick up the wounded man, one of us holds the arm with the splint on it. And in a group we stumble away as quickly as possible.

The cemetery has been blown to pieces. Coffins and corpses are scattered all around. They have been killed for a second time;[81] but every corpse that was shattered saved the life of one of us.

The fence has been wrecked, the rails of the field railway on the other side have been ripped out and bent upwards, so that they point to the sky. Someone is lying on the ground in front of us. We stop. Kropp goes on alone with the wounded man.

The man on the ground is a recruit. He has blood smeared all over one hip; he is so exhausted that I reach for my flask, which has tea with rum in it. Kat holds back my hand and bends over him. 'Where did you cop it, mate?' He moves his eyes, too weak to answer.

Carefully we cut away his trousers. He moans. "It's OK, OK, it'll soon be better…"

If he's been hit in the stomach then he mustn't drink anything. He has thrown up, and that is a good sign. We expose the hip area. It is just a pulp of torn flesh and splintered bone. The joint has been hit. This lad will never walk again.

I wet my fingers and run them across his forehead, then give him a drink. Some life comes into his eyes. It's only now that we realise that his right arm is bleeding as well.

Kat spreads out two field dressings as wide as he can, so that they cover the wound. I look around for some cloth, so that I can tie it up loosely. We haven't got anything. So I cut more of the wounded man's trousers away so that I can use a piece of his underpants as a bandage. But he isn't wearing any.[82] I look at him more closely. It's the blond lad from earlier on.

Meanwhile Kat has fetched a couple more field dressings from the pockets of dead soldiers, and we place them carefully on the wound. The lad is looking at us with a fixed gaze.

"We'll go and get a stretcher now."

But he opens his mouth and whispers, "Stay here –"

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[80] Unlike the other prose extracts studied, this is written in first person. What are the effects? Does it affect us differently?

[81] Similarities with other descriptions of the effects of war. What different is that here we have already dead bodies instead of men being killed

[82] What's surprising about this? Why might this be?

Kat says, “We’ll be back in a minute. We’re going to get a stretcher for you.”

It is impossible to say whether he understands or not; he whimpers like a child behind us as we go: “Stay here –“

Kat looks all round and then whispers, “Wouldn’t it be best just to take a revolver and put him out of his misery?”[83]

The lad is not likely to survive being moved, and at the very most he’ll last a couple of days. But everything he’s been through so far will be nothing compared to those few days until he dies. At the moment he is still in shock and can’t feel anything. Within an hour he’ll be a screaming mass of unbearable agonies, and the few days he still has left to live will just be an incessant raging torture. And what difference does it make to anyone whether he has to suffer them or not?

I nod. “You’re right Kat. The best thing would be a bullet.”

“Give me a gun,” he says, and stops walking. I can see that he is set on it. We look around – but we’re not alone any more. A small group is gathering near us, and heads are appearing out of the shell holes and trenches.

We bring a stretcher.

Kat shakes his head. “Such young lads –“ He says it again: “Such young innocent lads-”

[83] What’s the effect of these dialogue exchanges?

Additional reading

Community and comradeship in *Journey's End*

The relationships between the men in the dugout point to a sense of trust and community that seems to help them cope with the horrors of trench life. Even though Stanhope's dislike of Hibbert is clear, he still encourages him. This conveys to the audience the importance of "getting on together". Stanhope says, "Shall we go on together? We know how we both feel now. Shall we see if we can stick it together?" The rhetoric he uses here in convincing Hibbert that he is a part of a close team is what persuades Hibbert to carry on. Suggesting that Hibbert is not doing his duty for the other men in the company, and convincing him that they must "stick together" is what changes his mind.

Even the idea of an 'enemy' is brought into question as we are reminded by Raleigh that Germans are just ordinary people. He says, "The Germans are really quite decent, aren't they? I mean, outside the newspapers?"

The audience reflects that German soldiers too were mostly naïve and enthusiastic young men, like the characters in the play. This is reinforced when we see the fear of the German soldier, called "boy" in the stage directions and described as "sobbing bitterly".

The men are shown in a claustrophobic setting, stuck together day and night in cramped surroundings. As so much of the time is spent waiting, we see them getting to know each other well.

The use of formal surnames - normal in public schools and the army - is something the audience are forced to think about at the end of the play. When Raleigh is dying he calls Stanhope "Dennis". Stanhope replies - to the audience's surprise - with "Jimmy". While there is a hierarchy in the army, Sherriff shows that these men were - underneath it all - friends and comrades.

Friendship and Human Interaction in *Journey's End*

In *Journey's End*, R.C. Sherriff showcases the effect of war on personal relationships. In particular, he focuses on how wartime power dynamics and interpersonal attitudes alter the ways people interact with one another. This is most recognizable in **Stanhope** and **Raleigh**'s friendship, which suffers because of the various stressors of military life. For the majority of his young adult life, Raleigh has looked up to Stanhope, a classmate who eventually goes off to war and becomes a captain. While Stanhope is off in the trenches of World War I, Raleigh stays behind and finishes school, all the while worshiping Stanhope as a hero. Later, when Raleigh joins the military, he is placed under Stanhope's command. But although he's ecstatic to join his hero's infantry, he soon discovers that his relationship with Stanhope will be quite different during wartime. Not only has the war taken a significant toll on Stanhope's wellbeing, but his high position in the military also forces him to treat Raleigh with rough indifference. In this way, Sherriff suggests that human companionship is highly contextual, something that grows according to the emotional circumstances that define the immediate environment. Like human beings themselves, then, relationships aren't fixed or unchanging, but dynamic and adaptive.

When Raleigh first reports to duty as an officer in World War I, he's overjoyed to have been assigned to Stanhope's infantry. He knows Stanhope from before the war, when the captain was a rugby hero several years his senior. Raleigh and Stanhope got to know each other and developed a friendship of sorts during the summers, since their fathers were friends. Stanhope also became romantically involved with Raleigh's sister, who is now waiting for him to return from the war. Since this period, Raleigh has looked up to Stanhope and imagined him as a valorous captain. But what he doesn't know is that, while Stanhope is indeed a well-respected soldier, he has also turned into a gruff and pessimistic alcoholic.

Upon arriving in the trenches, Raleigh speaks with **Osborne**—the second-in-command—and learns of Stanhope's transformation. Osborne is fond of Stanhope, but he also recognizes that the war has had a harsh effect on him. He warns Raleigh that he shouldn't expect his relationship with Stanhope to pick up where it left off. "You mustn't expect to find [Stanhope]—quite the same," he says, and then suggests that Stanhope has become "quick-tempered." Raleigh brushes this off, saying, "Oh, I know old Dennis's temper! I remember once at school he caught some chaps in a study with a bottle of whisky. Lord! the roof nearly blew off." Raleigh doesn't seem to grasp that Stanhope has changed, instead assuming that his old friend, who has become an alcoholic, is still someone who would lose his temper over catching his subordinates drinking. Raleigh's conception of Stanhope is based on a frame of reference that can't effectively be applied to the current circumstances. After all, the way Stanhope interacted with people as a boarding school role model has little in common with how he must now act as a military captain trying to command soldiers in the trenches.

Osborne, for his part, picks up on Raleigh's naïve assumption that he'll be able to approach his relationship with Stanhope the same way he used to. "You must remember he's commanded this company for a long time," Osborne says of Stanhope. "It's—it's a big strain on a man." Osborne tries to emphasize that people change according to what's happening in their lives—and if a person changes, it follows that their relationships will also change. Stanhope himself seems to understand this, which is why he's unhappy that Raleigh has

been assigned to his infantry; he knows he has changed for the worse, and he comprehends that this means his relationship with Raleigh will most likely change for the worse, too. Speaking to Osborne soon after Raleigh arrives, Stanhope says, “Didn’t you see him sitting there at supper?—staring at me?—and wondering? He’s up in those trenches now—still wondering—and beginning to understand.”

Of course, there’s another reason Stanhope doesn’t want Raleigh to “understand” how he has changed: he fears Raleigh will write to his sister and tell her how wretched Stanhope has become. To ensure that this doesn’t happen, he decides to censor Raleigh’s letters. When he tells him his plan to do this, their tense conversation shows how these new wartime circumstances have altered the way they interact. “D’you understand an order? Give me that letter!” Stanhope says. “Dennis—I’m—” Raleigh sputters, but Stanhope cuts him off, saying, “Don’t ‘Dennis’ me! Stanhope’s my name! You’re not at school! Go and inspect your rifles!” This exchange exemplifies how both Stanhope and Raleigh struggle to navigate the new terms of their relationship.

By examining the painful transformation of Stanhope and Raleigh’s relationship, Sherriff makes it clear that friendship and human interaction is greatly dependent upon the surrounding interpersonal context. However, while relationships are certainly fluid and adaptive, Sherriff suggests that there *are* certain bonds that are more resilient than others. Osborne proposes this idea to Stanhope, assuring the captain that, though his relationship with Raleigh may indeed change, this doesn’t necessarily mean the war will completely ruin their connection. “I believe Raleigh’ll go on liking you,” Osborne says, “There’s something very deep, and rather fine, about hero-worship.” Although Raleigh certainly notices how the emotional and psychological effect of the war has influenced both Stanhope as an individual and Raleigh’s relationship with Stanhope, his admiration of the struggling captain will enable him to “go on liking” him. In this way, Sherriff shows readers that just because human relationships change according to their surrounding circumstances doesn’t mean they aren’t also resilient. Though trying environments—like those presented by war—force people to adjust the way they interact with one another, this doesn’t have to ruin what lies at the core of a relationship. In the final scene of *Journey’s End*, Stanhope treats the gravely injured Raleigh with gentleness and care, and the audience sees that these two men have maintained their connection even if the context of their relationship has profoundly shifted. With this, Sherriff advances a nuanced take on human interaction, one that allows for both change and constancy.

Male Comradeship In Literature – David Han

https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/eng2800hmwa2015fall/?p=464

One of the most common themes of literature is male comradeship. Male comradeship is the relationship between male characters who share one's interests, activities and gaining the trust of one another. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare, the theme is depicted through each story by two primary male characters. These great works illustrate comradery by depicting the heart of their stories and by conveying multiple expressions of loyalty, trust, as well as brotherly love.

In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the two primary characters who share a male comradery are Gilgamesh and Enkidu. Gilgamesh is the king of Uruk, who was the strongest of men, "Two-thirds of him was divine, one-third of him was human!" (Tablet I). Enkidu is the companion who was raised in the jungle by animals. Both were very similar in terms of their physical characteristics such as height and physical strength. The moment they encountered each other, they aspired to become rivals. The pair wrestled and fought to respect one another's strength. At the end of the battle, "They kissed each other and made friends", they saw that they could be no winner and they became comrades (Tablet II). The relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu is much more impactful on Gilgamesh rather than Enkidu. Even though Enkidu is the uncivilized one who was trying to learn how mankind lives in a new environment with other humans rather than being in a jungle with animals. Before meeting his comrade, Enkidu, he was very unstable, almost uncontrollable. "Day and night he would rampage fiercely." (Tablet I). Gilgamesh comes to understand and learn what it means to be mortal. This is depicted when they both sought out to defeat Humbaba, the forest orge and Bull of Heaven. After both battles, both Gilgamesh and Enkdu realized that they were mortals. Gilgamesh and Enkidu were disrespectful towards Ishtar the goddess by means of childish acts. In addition, they defied Enlil, the god of Earth, Wind and Air, by killing his servant Humbaba. Enkidu was punished by death.

Enkidu's death stunned Gilgamesh. "Tearing out and hurling away the locks of his hair, Ripping off and throwing away his fine clothes like something foul" (Tablet VIII). He ripped his clothes and hair off. Gilgamesh lamented to his friend. The beginning of the weeping is filled with imagery of animals and nature. For example, "Onagers raised you on their milk, And the wild beasts taught you all the grazing places." This quote expresses the life of Enkidu before meeting Gilgamesh. The lamentation is almost like a timeline from beginning to end. As the lamentation progresses, the imagery invokes the life of living in Uruk. For instance, "May the shepherd and herdsman weep for you, Who held the milk and the buttermilk to your mouth" (Tablet VIII. Volume A pg 133). The *Epic of Gilgamesh* suggests that death is inescapable. The idea of death to Gilgamesh is almost nonexistent before Enkidu's death. When they were together, the fear of death was not present because they distracted each other from it. "Their actions influenced one another into believing that they were completely immortal. The dynamic of male comradery between these two characters ultimately leads to one character's death and another's triumph.

In *Hamlet*, the male comrades are Hamlet and Horatio. Hamlet is the main protagonist of this tragedy. He is the cruel and cynical Prince of Denmark. Horatio is Hamlet's trusted friend from the university they attend. But how does Horatio become the trusted friend of the Prince of Denmark. In the tragedy of *Hamlet,* Horatio's role in the play is minor.

However, his role to the character development of Hamlet is key and crucial part. Horatio serves two purposes to Hamlet. The first being the obvious which is being his closest companion. They share deep conversations that allow the audience to have an insight into Hamlet's true feelings. These deep conversations can include Hamlet's soliloquies where Hamlet expresses his thinking to the audience. The second is being the outside spectator to the madness for both the audience and to Hamlet. When Horatio accepted the Ghost's existence during the first scene of Act I, it is recognized that Hamlet has seen the ghost King of Denmark. If Horatio wasn't there, Hamlet's sanity and judgment would be in doubt throughout the story.

At the end of the tragedy of *Hamlet*, it is the main protagonist that dies unlike the *Epic of Gilgamesh* where Enkidu died and not Gilgamesh. When Hamlet lies dying, Horatio shows his love for his dying friend by preparing himself to commit suicide. However, Horatio states at the end of the tragedy, "Of that I shall have also cause to speak, And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more" which helps decides Horatio to live in order to tell Hamlet's story (Act V, scene II. Volume C pg 751). They both share death scenes where one character is holding another in their arms.

The theme of comradeship is thoroughly expressed throughout these two works of literature. Overall, the development within these characters are highly effected by another character with common interests.

What Is Symbolism?

https://www.masterclass.com/articles/writing-101-what-is-symbolism-symbolism-definition-and-examples-in-literature#what-is-symbolism

Symbolism is a literary device that uses symbols, be they words, people, marks, locations, or abstract ideas to represent something beyond the literal meaning.

The concept of symbolism is not confined to works of literature: symbols inhabit every corner of our daily life. For instance, the colors red, white, and blue typically symbolize patriotism (in America at least), which is why they're the favored hues of political yard signs. Colors like orange and brown connote fall, which is why they adorn so many Thanksgiving decorations. Road signs, logos, and emojis are other examples of symbolism—the visuals correspond to ideas, companies, or moods.

How Has Symbolism Been Used Throughout History?

In literature, authors have long favored the use of symbols among a wide range of literary devices.

- The earliest recorded forms of human storytelling—cave paintings and hieroglyphics—are quite literally symbols representing more complex narratives or beliefs.
- Ancient Greek theater, which is the basis for much of today's narrative artforms, used symbolic props including phallic objects to represent Dionysus, the god of fertility. Symbolism remained in wide use throughout the Middle Ages (almost always with religious connotations) and then, from the Renaissance forward, returned in full force to represent human desires ranging from lust to ambition to heartbreak.
- William Shakespeare used symbols to represent inner conscience (think of blood in *Macbeth*); Edgar Allen Poe used it to convey dread and mortality (think of the eponymous bird in "The Raven"); and William Blake used religious symbols (including Jesus himself) to represent human emotion and desire (as in "The Everlasting Gospel").

3 Types of Symbolism in Literature

While the subject matter of literature has varied with the ages, the definition of symbolism has remained constant. All symbolism is united by the concept of a word or object representing something beyond its literal meaning. Throughout history, certain types of symbolism have enjoyed particular favor from authors, poets, playwrights, and lyricists:

- Religious symbolism. This has been perhaps the most consistently "acceptable" form of symbolism throughout literary history, as it's typically been sanctioned by religious authorities who have held sway over society for much of human existence. Religious symbolism traces back to the earliest human civilizations, but highlights of literary religious symbolism include *Paradise Lost* by John Milton (itself a retelling of the Genesis story); and *The Brothers Karamazov* by the Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky (among its subtle symbolism is a physical representation of the Holy Spirit).

- Romantic symbolism. Perhaps second only to religious symbolism, romantic symbolism has pervaded wide swaths of world literature. Poetry, from the sonnets of Shakespeare to the modernist stanzas of Edna St. Vincent Millay, has been a particularly fertile medium for romantic symbolism.
- Emotional symbolism. Many authors and poets use physical symbolism to describe metaphysical emotions. French language symbolists like Stéphane Mallarmé and Paul Verlaine are noted for this form of symbolism, as are English language writers like William Butler Yeats and Seamus Heaney.

5 Ways to Use Symbolism in Writing

Symbolism can elevate writing to a sensory experience. Symbols can give words double meanings, both literal and figurative, and writers can say more with less. Symbolism can also be a sort of secret language between the writer and the reader. Specifically, symbolism can be used to:

- Add emotion. Symbols add emotional resonance to a story, which can create a lasting impression on a reader. For example, in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the guilt-ridden Lady Macbeth is tortured by a spot of blood on her hands that will not wash clean after she kills King Duncan.
- Add imagery. Symbols add a visual element to complex themes. In Seamus Heaney's 1995 poem "A Dog Was Crying To-Night in Wicklow Also," the author uses the image of "burnt wood disappearing into smoke" to describe the concept of dead humans drifting out of other people's consciousness.
- Connect themes. The color green used throughout F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* is a marker for the money and materialism that defines life on the North Shore of Long Island.
- Define characters. Symbols can express character attributes. For example, the *Harry Potter* series of books, Harry's lightning bolt-shaped scar symbolizes the attempt on his life by Lord Voldemort and the love that saved him.
- Conceal darker meaning. In *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Hester's seemingly feral daughter Pearl symbolizes the sin that led to her conception. Her difficult demeanor represents the secret at the heart of her existence—that her father is the prominent reverend Arthur Dimmesdale. Only when Dimmesdale's paternity is revealed does Pearl transition into a positive symbol: the freeing spirit of the natural world.

How to Use Symbolism in Writing in 2 Easy Steps

The best symbolism in literature is the type that supports a story, rather than one that subsumes the story.

- In your first draft of a novel, short story, play, or screenplay, focus primarily on creating compelling characters and placing them in an engaging story. Don't preoccupy yourself with symbols at this stage, lest they become the central focus of your writing.
- Once you've drafted (or at least outlined) your overall story, look for ways to insert symbols to represent themes already baked into your narrative.

- Small-scale symbolism (such as the way a person dresses or the type of music they listen to) can add texture and help your audience understand the inner life of your characters.
- Large-scale symbolism (such as weather events or physical descriptions of buildings or cities) can convey an overall mood or can make statements about broad themes like love, death, and power.
- If you intentionally craft your symbols to service the themes already in your story, you will make your narrative all the more vivid and meaningful, without overrunning it with cosmetic detail.

Additional resources

The following comes from:
https://tychy.wordpress.com/2011/06/01/the-mansize-companion-to-r-c-sherriffs-journeys-end/

CONTEXT

Robert Cedric Sherriff would make his name and fortune from *Journey's End*, which was first staged in 1928 and thereafter adapted for Broadway, film, and television. This play proved to be Sherriff's passport to professional writing, but perhaps he was a bit too professional, for along with penning the screenplays for such cinematic classics as *Goodbye Mr. Chips* and *The Dam Busters*, he ultimately submitted a cheerful but undistinguished series of historical dramas, mysteries, and ghost stories. There must have been audiences for these plays, because he kept writing them, but only *Journey's End* remains in print today.

Journey's End is, to my knowledge, the only one of Sherriff's plays to draw upon his first-hand experience of the Great War as a captain in the 9th East Surrey Regiment. Perhaps in 1928 the world was finally ready to be told about the trenches, and before long there was no scarcity of books which had assumed the task of bringing them back in all of their horror. *Journey's End* was launched a month before the publication of Eric Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929), and it was soon followed by Robert Graves' *Good-Bye to All That* (1929) and Siegfried Sassoon's *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (1930).

The desire to avoid a Second World War, by means of League of Nations' sanctions or diplomatic appeasement, was shared by the overwhelming majority of the British electorate. *Journey's End* looks both to the past and to the future, in simultaneously preserving a common memory of the trenches and reminding its audiences that future wars were likely to be just as bad. But beyond this general message, the play seems to have nothing further to say. These soldiers are waiting to die, and we can only wait with them. We may admire their stoicism, but we cannot help noticing that it has done them little good. There is a danger, however, of identifying too closely with these soldiers until we share their own acceptance of their circumstances. For supposing that the end of this particular "journey" was not death, but life?

THE ONLY QUESTION

A regiment waits to be slaughtered, like pigs on the road to an abattoir, and it is not coincidental that the officer who seems happiest in the trenches is a greedy fellow who is capped with the porcine name of Trotter.

A British task force prepares to raid a German trench. They blow holes in the barbed wire shielding the trench and the Germans make it abundantly clear that they are expecting the raid by tying red rags to the wire as targets for their machine guns. The British go over the top anyway. It is reported that they "naturally take it as a joke. They say that the rags are just what they want to show them the way through the gap." This raid is for most of them, however, suicide. The stupidity of the British in this respect is only matched by that of the Germans, who, despite expecting the raid, leave a young soldier behind to be kidnapped.

Seven of the British soldiers die and it is unclear what they contributed to the war effort because things carry on exactly the same in the trenches after their deaths. The prospects for this raid may have been greater if it was held after nightfall, but the brigadier had decreed that, "the present arrangements have got to stand," not least because a late raid would have disrupted his dinner.

The British only regard the Germans as enemies in a strictly formal sense, for they otherwise never articulate any warlike hatred of them, nor even any particular reason for fighting them. In an ironic reflection of the play's actual theatricality, these soldiers are like actors who are trying to follow a script which they did not write and do not understand.

But they are not actors and their blood is real. Why, then, do they not have a revolution?

This is the obvious question. It is the only question. Even if the soldiers merely deserted *en masse* then, whatever the problems created in the long term, they would, at least in the short term, live. One may protest that this would deliver a decisive military advantage to the Germans, but what of it? Would it matter to these soldiers if they surrendered the unrecognisable remains of an arbitrary French landscape? Would they feel any real dishonour or regret? Our brief glimpse of the German POW who was captured in the British raid affirms that his imprisonment by the enemy is merely the equivalent of being released from that of his own military service.

These soldiers could daringly aspire to return home alive, ready to forget about the trenches and to set to work on building the modern world. Versailles would never happen. The rise of Hitler and the whole of the Second World War would be conceivably avoided. On the home front, the collapse of established authority would lead to greater liberties and a better society. In other words, the *dramatis personae* of *Journey's End* have the fortunes of Western civilisation in their hands and they make the wrong decision. They continue with the charade that the Germans are their enemies, rather than the authorities who are perpetuating this moronic war. The student of twentieth-century history will be conscious that revolutions often end in bloodshed, philistinism, and the wholesale negation of human promise, but here is an example of a people who suffer the same fate precisely because they have failed to have a revolution.

What prevents them? Or rather, who prevents them?

STANHOPE

Captain Dennis Stanhope frets that he is not really a hero, because he nightly drowns his cowardice in whisky, but we may generously pronounce that he is really heroic because he continues to fight his cowardice rather than agreeing to be invalided out of the trenches. Stanhope's heroism is not merely a personal ideal, which anchors his character in a chaotic world, but it is also a means of manipulating the men under his command. He effectively declares that, "I have sacrificed my life for the good of the regiment and therefore you should too."

Hibbert is the only officer to significantly dissent from the war effort – the only pig who can smell the abattoir – and it will take all of Stanhope's wiles to prevent him from deserting. He indeed traps Hibbert like an animal: the doctor will dismiss his "neuralgia" and send him back to the front, whilst Stanhope offers to execute Hibbert himself rather than sending him

to be shot for desertion. This is superficially a confrontation between judicious authority and a lousy "shirker," but Hibbert will prove brave enough to offer his life rather than submitting any further to Stanhope's regime; whilst his act of "striking a superior officer" symbolises the only revolutionary challenge to established authority in the entire play.

Stanhope resorts to a calculated display of friendship and a solidarity which perversely upholds authority. He claims that, "Every little noise up there makes me feel – just as you feel… We all feel like you do sometimes, if you only knew." If Stanhope had originally wanted Hibbert to conform to his example of stoical heroism, he is now forced to reveal his own cowardice and to conform to Hibbert's image like a shape-shifting devil from peasant lore. But this cowardice can only lead back to stoicism, and Hibbert is hypnotised with the logic that he should accept the trenches because everybody else does so – a logic which would uphold any exploitation. Once the threat from Hibbert is neutralised, Stanhope can safely snarl, "Little worm gets on my nerves… Doesn't his repulsive little mind make you sick?"

"There's not a man left who was here when I came," Stanhope admits, which is rather an indictment of his leadership. Although nobody particularly benefits from this war, Stanhope does exact certain privileges, such as dining on fresh food with his commanding officers. It seems unlikely that the spectacle of his debauched drinking would be tolerated in ordinary soldiers. Yet Stanhope remains a victim of the very system which he champions, and acts such as his rebuke to the insensitive colonel reveal a basic decency in his character. To adequately account of the disaster in the trenches, we should look both into and beyond Stanhope.

SMASH THE SYSTEM

Students are typically required to evaluate the characters of the various officers, dwelling upon Osborne's wisdom, Trotters' greed, and Raleigh's rather unlikely innocence, but this is part of the problem: all of these soldiers, including Stanhope, are *only* individuals, they are fatally isolated, and they lack the wherewithal to come together in solidarity.

The first two soldiers whom we encounter are characteristically at loggerheads: the cynical Captain Hardy helpfully tells Osborne that, "I should think you'll get it – right in the neck," whilst Osborne counters that, "you won't be far away." This is not the dialogue of men who are fighting together in a common cause. The personal isolation of these soldiers is taken to extremes in Stanhope's confession, which provides some of the play's most significant lines. He demands of Osborne:

> *D'you ever get a sudden feeling that everything's going farther and farther away – till you're the only thing in the world – and then the world begins going away – until you're the only thing in – in the universe – and you struggle to get back – and can't?*

Rather than being at the heart of a military operation and a social institution, Stanhope is apparently an isolated psyche, adrift in an empty universe. Osborne tries to medicalise Stanhope's cosmic loneliness as a "bit of nerve strain," but it remains very much a social condition.

This isolation is partly produced by the conditions of wartime, when the state nationalised most means of communication and the absence of reliable information left ordinary people

feeling alone and powerless. When Trotter jokes that, “my wife reads the papers every morning and writes and tells me” what is “going on,” he is doubly wrong, for both newspapers and personal correspondence were censored by the state.

Yet Edwardian society more generally prevented a revolutionary mindset from emerging by determining the behaviour of individuals in manifold, subtle, and often consensual ways. The minds of these soldiers have been produced by a culture in which social institutions are deferentially accepted and one has no choice but to obey established authority. When that authority abandons them, these men can only cherish their memories and personal experiences, rather than envisioning their place in an alternative social destiny.

Stanhope dreams that he will eventually “go away for months and live in the open air and get fit,” before returning to his beloved, who seems to be more of an ideal than a person. He is reportedly accustomed to sitting in a “country vicarage sipping tea,” whilst Osborne‘s home life is equally explosive: “I spent all the time in the garden, making a rockery. In the evenings I used to sit and smoke and read – and my wife used to knit socks and play the piano a bit.” These men are sustained by the memory of home – of peaceful gardens and faithful women – rather than by the idea of fighting for a better future.

But home is the very last thing to have been left at home. These trenches never resemble a warring frontier because there is a general aspiration to make them homely and suburban, with more sustained attention given to planning dinners than to fighting the war. Stanhope complains that the trenches “smell like cess-pits” (what else could they smell like?) and he is not wholly joking when scoffing, “Clean trenches up – with little dustpan and brush… Make you little apron – with lace on it.” Osborne admires beautiful sunsets from the trenches, no doubt wishing that he was back in his garden. After battle he will return to the trenches for a “good hot bath” and “something special for dinner.” It is comical in itself to imagine these peaceable bourgeois folk at war (“Osborne: Don’t forget to throw your bombs”).

When these men do put their heads together, there are scant and somewhat whimsical results. Osborne recites some lines from *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, which vaguely anticipate his own immanent death, and Trotter replies that “I don’t see no point in that,” although a few moments ago he had trilled some equally premonitory children’s verses about “strawberry jam.” There is at least solidarity between Trotter and Osborne at a subconscious level of nonsense. Osborne and Raleigh recite “The Walrus and the Carpenter” together before the raid, and, ludicrously, they only achieve the beginnings of a solidarity when enthusing over their shared fondness for the New Forest.

The Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci once defined hegemony as the sense that cultural norms were “natural” and “inevitable,” and Trotter’s particular gift is for making “things feel – natural.” To listen to Osborne and Trotter chatting, one would think that they were fighting for their gardens rather than for the nation, but Trotter unites the two when planting flowerbeds which display the colours of the Union Jack (except erroneously since calceolaria is yellow rather than, as he claims, “white.”) Trotter further reduces the Great War to a question of gardening when mistaking the blossom of a “may-tree” for Phosgene. The social order can hardly be accepted as natural when these soldiers “putting on gas masks because of a damn may tree” cannot recognise nature in the first place.

At times, the Great War seems to be an extension of the public schooling which has produced these men. Osborne hopes that, “we’re lucky and get a youngster straight from school. They’re the kind that do best.” Stanhope’s company is led by “no more than a boy,” and supervised by a former schoolmaster and sports referee, but, oddly, this strengthens rather than undermines its authority. In school, Stanhope willingly upheld authority by punishing his fellow pupils for smoking and drinking, and whilst we may regard him as a jumped up little martinet, his glamour inspires Raleigh for the rest of his life. The erstwhile schoolmaster Osborne urges that, “There’s something very deep and rather fine about hero-worship.” On his death bed, Raleigh can only understand what is happening to him in the light of an injury which he obtained in “rugger.”

When Raleigh ventures that “The Germans are really quite decent, aren’t they,” Osborne cites an example of the sportsmanship of the other side. The wholesale lack of hatred for the enemy is possibly a disadvantage of warfare conducted by sportsmen. When Stanhope grows morbid, Osborne suggests that they talk about “croquet, or the war.” The interrogation of the captured German soldier resembles an errant schoolchild being hauled before his headmaster. The boy is made to empty his pockets, revealing a treasure trove of “bit o’ string; little box o’ fruit drops; pocket-knife… bit o’cedar pencil – and a stick of chocolate.” It may seem amusing that these items are Britain’s latest colonial acquisitions, and perhaps it is appropriate that the Lewis Carroll-reciting Osborne has devoted his life to delivering this plunder to the British empire. Alas, the colonel returns the boy’s useless “oddments.”

Raleigh’s schooling has preserved him within a perpetual childhood. He is awed by the sight of Lancer’s Alley, as if it was a working toy town, whilst Osborne eggs him on with the advice, “Think of it all as – as romantic. It helps.” The prospect of the raid strikes Raleigh as being “most frightfully exciting,” but his repulsion for the unsporting attitude of his fellow officers potentially leads him to a solidarity with the offstage soldiers. Stanhope may wonder whether Raleigh is undermining his regime, but the ideal of heroism upholds military discipline by enforcing a distinction between heroes and followers, and Raleigh, with his name suggesting a Tudor adventurer from a gentler age, is so immaculate a hero that perhaps Stanhope can soon envision following him.

This duly happens when the understudy Raleigh replaces Stanhope as the hero. During the final massacre, Raleigh assumes the mask of Stanhope’s heroism, Stanhope remains cowering in his dugout, and we are left to witness the cowardly reality behind the facade. The officers’ dugout always had a backstage quality – the hushed, intense atmosphere of a dressing room in the middle of a performance – and it is as if Stanhope’s Hamlet has become stricken with stage-fright before the final act, and he will not partake in the slaughter. When Raleigh dies, however, Stanhope must again become the hero and take to the stage. “All right… I’m coming.” If this is the way the world ends, most of these men have only greeted the bangs with a whimper.

“Glamorous Melancholy” – RC Sherriff’s Journey’s End

Steven Trout

https://www.dropbox.com/s/rpqx31y24ggs1fv/%22Glamorous%20Melancholy%22-%20R.%20C.%20Shemiffs%20Journey%27s%20End.pdf?dl=0

Assessment

Question	Task	Marks
1	**Read the following extract:** **Raleigh**: The Germans are really quite decent, aren't they? I mean, outside the newspapers? **Osborne**: Yes. [*Pause*] I remember up at Wipers we had a man shot when he was out on patrol. Just at dawn. We couldn't get him in that night. He lay out there groaning all day. Next night three of our men crawled out to get him in. It was so near the German trenches that they could have shot our fellows one by one. But, when our men began dragging the wounded man back over the rough ground, a big German officer stood up in their trenches and called out: "Carry him!" — and our fellows stood up and carried the man back, and the German officer fired some lights for them to see by. **Raleigh**: How topping! **Osborne**: Next day we blew each other's trenches to blazes. **Raleigh**: It all seems rather — silly, doesn't it? **Osborne**: It does, rather. Answer these questions about the extract: a. Who is in the extract? b. What did they do? c. When did these events take place? d. Where did these events take place? e. Why did the characters act as they did? Now use these answers to write a sentence summarising what happens in the extract.	4 marks
2	Suggest **three epithets** could you choose to describe Osborne and Raleigh	2 marks
3	How does Sherriff suggest that war is **absurd**? a) Write a **thesis statement** that answers this question. b) Give two **examples** that support your answer. Choose an example from the extract and one from your knowledge of the play as a whole.	3 marks
4	What advice would you give to the actors playing Osborne and Raleigh about how they should perform their roles?	2 marks for 2 points about each character. Up to 4 marks
5	"Well, if you want to get the best pace out of an earwig, dip it in whiskey — makes 'em go like hell!"	3 marks

	Use **tenor, vehicle** and **ground** to explain what the earwigs symbolise.	
6	How do you think an audience should react to Raleigh in this scene? a) Write a **thesis statement** that answers this question. b) Explain how this links to a theme from the play c) Use your thesis statement to write **two** linked **topic sentences** For each topic sentence d) select a quotation that illustrate your point e) Analyse what you notice about these examples f) Evaluate why Sherriff might have made these choice	Up to 10 marks
7	Give definitions for the following terms: a) Realism b) Dialogue c) Denouement d) Absurdity e) Juxtaposition f) Protagonist g) Characterization h) Irony	1 mark each, up to 8 marks
8	Suggest **two reasons** why Journey's End might be described as 'modernist'.	1 mark
9	Explain how Stanhope can be viewed as a tragic hero	1 mark
10	Suggest two examples of symbolism from *Journey's End*	1 mark
11	What poetic form is Wilfred Owen's poem 'Futility'?	1 mark
12	How does *Journey's End* conform to Aristotle's unities?	1 mark
13	Write the correct definition for each of the words below: a. What does **patriotism** mean? b. What does **ambivalent** mean? c. What does **fatuous** mean? d. What does **incompetent** mean? e. What does **futility** mean?	1 mark each, up to 5 marks
14	The poet who wrote 'Anthem for Doomed Youth' and 'Futility' is….? a) Siegfried Sassoon b) Wilfred Owen c) Robert Graves	1 mark

15	Comradeship means…? a) Friendship with others with common aims b) Serving in the armed forces c) Sticking up for those who are weak and vulnerable.	1 mark
16	An example of heroism in *Journey's End* is…? a) Stanhope admitting to Hibbert that he "hates and loathes it all." b) Raleigh's excitement about being selected for the raid. c) Osborne calmly following the order to lead the raid.	1 mark
17	A subordinating conjunction is…? a) Words like because, but or so. b) A word which introduces a subordinate clause c) A word which joins together two clauses	1 mark
18	Write a paragraph describing a World War One trench  Make sure you use the following sentence types: - More, more, more - 3 verb sentence - Past participle start - Simile start - 3 word sentence	5 marks

Total: _____ out of 54 marks