

Knowledge Organiser

Blood Brothers by Willy Russell



Set from 1960 – 1980
In Liverpool, England



Key Themes

Childhood Adolescence
Superstition
Violence
Nature Vs Nurture
Social Class

Features of form		
1.	A didactic play	A drama which intends to teach, especially with regard to morals.
2.	Tragedy	An event causing great suffering, destruction and distress.
3.	Parallels and contrasts	Parallels – similarities. Contrasts – differences.
4.	Narrator	A person who gives the spoken account of something. Omniscient to remind the audience about the ending of the play.
5.	Stage directions	An instruction in the text of the play indicating the movement, the position or tone of an actor, or the sound effects and lighting.
6.	Song	A single work of music that is typically intended to be sung by the human voice. It is through the songs that the characters reveal their true thoughts and feelings.
7.	Dialogue	A conversation between two or more people.
8.	Montage	A series of short sequences are edited into a sequence to condense space.
9.	Foreshadowing	A warning or indication of a future event.
10.	Symbols and motifs	A thing that represents or stands for something else. A motif is a dominant or recurring image of idea.
11.	Accent and dialect versus Standard English	Standard English is any form of the English Language that is accepted as a national norm. Accent is a distinctive way of pronouncing a language. Dialect is a particular form of language which is peculiar to a specific range or social group.

Context		
Willy Russell	1.	Born into a working class family.
	2.	He grew up near Liverpool.
	3.	Father had various jobs including mining and factory work.
	4.	Annoyed at treatment of intelligent working class and associated stereotypes.
	5.	Left school at 15 with just one O'level: a D in English Language. Went to evening classes and university to become a teacher.
Liverpool	6.	A major port and the centre for trade providing lots of jobs at the docks.
	7.	During the Industrial decline, Liverpool became very vulnerable as the docks were shut and unemployment rates soared.
	8.	Some men turned to crime and gangs in order to support themselves and their families. There were also riots in 1980s.
Margaret Thatcher	9.	Prime Minister in 1979.
	10.	Reduced the power of the trade unions and closed down many factories etc leading to widespread unemployment.
Skelmersdale	11.	In the 1960s the government began building New Towns. These were small, existing towns which were extended and redeveloped to provide more housing for nearby cities.
	12.	Working class families were rehoused here in the 1960s.
Class	13.	Working class vs Middle class divide
	14.	More opportunities for middle classes reflected in education, job prospects and wealth.
Education	15.	The Education Act of 1944 led to 'secondary modern schools' and 'grammar schools.'
	16.	Top 20% went to a grammar school with an academic curriculum. Secondary modern taught more practical subjects.
	17.	7% of students were educated in private, fee-paying schools. The average boarding school fees in the 1960s would have been approximately 25%.



Characters		
1.	Mrs Johnstone	Naive, loving and maternal, caring, rash, strong, generous, good, selfless, uneducated, superstitious, lively, zesty, trapped, victim, helplessness,
2.	Mrs Lyons	Lonely, cold, wealthy, dependent, inconsiderate, pampered, self-centred, manipulative, over-protective, anxious, unreasonable, mad
3.	Mickey	Friendly, excitable, adventurous, sneaky, cast-off, wants to impress, shy, determined, bright, witty, hard-working, ambitious, trapped, victim
4.	Edward	Friendly, generous, naive, restricted, impulsive, lacks compassion, condescending, sneaky
5.	Sammy	Aggressive, threatening, sarcastic, anti-social, criminal, hostile
6.	Linda	Kind, compassionate, feisty, humorous, strong-willed, supportive, protective, poor, untrustworthy, desperate