

Comparison with blood brothers and educating rita essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

My practical work in July 2009 was for option 2: acting. It was a piece of practical acting coursework and was based on the theme of class. The coursework was focused on Educating Rita and Blood Brothers which were both written by Willy Russell and both set in the 80's; we studied both of these in class and our coursework was to perform a section of Blood Brothers. My contribution to the performance was playing Mrs Johnstone in Blood Brothers from the beginning of the play to the song ' Easy Terms'.

This section of the play is very significant because it is when Mrs Johnstone makes a binding agreement to give Mrs Lyons one of her babies, which later results in what the story of the play is all about. In my performance I mimed to the song ' Marilyn Monroe' and to Mrs Johnstones and Mrs Lyons duet. I had to put on an accent and learn to mime to songs. I had experience being a cleaner and having so many children that I had no money to look after them.

I experienced being ' pregnant' because I had to have a cushion under my top to make it look like I was pregnant. To help me in my work I looked for information from Educating Rita because I found that Julie Walters played the character Rita very realistically. She put on an appropriate accent and showed how class changes people. I focused on how Julie Walters played Rita because I thought that Rita is much like Mrs Johnstone in terms of class; it helped me know what I have to do to play Mrs Johnstone efficiently.

The main objective which helped me in my work was when I and my fellow classmates went to see the production of Blood Brothers in the Belgrade theatre. Seeing Blood Brothers was the most useful material I looked at

because it helped me understand the play better, and it showed me how Willy Russell wanted his play to be performed e. g. Mickey being comical whilst with Eddie. I also learnt how Mrs Johnstone should be presented and how she should be played.

We also read the play Blood Brothers in depth and did plenty of work in it and helped each other understand each character and their motivations. Our piece was set in Liverpool in the 1980's which was also the time when Willy Russell wrote the play, and he came from Liverpool therefore he set his plays in the area he was familiar with and knew best. Educating Rita was similar to Blood Brothers because they both showed how class affects families and friendships.

They both show what life was like in the 80's and that people aspire to greater heights. The biggest differences were that one had a happy ending - Rita passed her exams and started a new life just how she wanted it at the start, and one had a tragic ending - Mickey and Edward were killed in Blood Brothers. Another big difference was that when Educating Rita is staged, it only has one set and only shows two characters. The people who appear in our production are Mrs Johnstone, Mrs Lyons and the Narrator.

The section which I have performed is focused on the decision of Mrs Johnstone giving Mrs Lyons one of her unborn baby twins, and how Mrs Johnstone is coping with only having a little amount of money and being in debt to the finance and catalogue man. In the whole performance of Blood Brothers, the main characters were Mickey, Eddie, Linda and Mrs Johnstone. In contrast, those in Educating Rita, there are only two protagonists who are

Frank and Rita. You could tell this because in the book of the play they are the only characters and in the film they are the main characters shown as they are what the story is about.

The culture of the two plays was the divide in class with the rich and poor side e. g. in Blood Brothers Mickey wasn't allowed to go and play in the rich end because that was where Edward lived, and his mother didn't want him finding out that his twin is alive. In Educating Rita, Rita wouldn't go and speak to the students because of the divide, but by the end of the play, when Rita has changed in class, she goes and speaks to them. We chose to perform in the style of modern tragedy because the play is a tragedy at the end...

One of the main similarities of class in Educating Rita and Blood Brothers is that people get laughed at because they are different. In Blood Brothers, Eddie gets laughed at by Mickey's friends because he is different, the laughing first started off because Eddie offered to share his sweets with everyone, and this was unusual for the other children. In Educating Rita, Rita comes across as the person people are laughing at because she is in a university, and it is unusual for people to go the university if they are from a lower class.

People laughed at Rita for her accent and the way she dressed. In contrast, Blood Brothers divide in class is very obvious, yet in Educating Rita the divide is less obvious and it subtle. We don't know why this is but it is just the way Willy Russell wrote his plays. In Blood Brothers Mickey experiences the view of an upper class society by being friends with Edward, like Rita

does in educating Rita by being friends with Frank. Frank seems to be cut off from a 'real' life because he is always at the university and is a drunk.

He doesn't even realise his partner is cheating on him. This is the same with Edward, as he is 'cut off' from what Mickey would portray as a real life.

Mickey would portray a real life by trying to earn money without having it given to you. Rita wants to be classified as a different class. She wants to be educated. Frank should not act embarrassed when he is around Rita, because this shows their strong relationship between them even though they have now known each other for much time. Frank's actions should be laid back because he does not really worry about the problems in life.

Frank does not care much about things, no matter how bad they are, this shows his lack of enthusiasm. The actor should talk quite slowly to signify Frank's boring motivation. Frank is not very exciting and does not have any interesting things about him apart from the fact that he is a literature teacher who is constantly drunk, he finds bad behaviour amusing, showing that he is not very good at his job, he tends to do the opposite of what he is meant to do and the only time the actor should act amused is when Rita says something offensive or disturbing.

For example, when Rita says 'is that because of me, because of what I said last week?' Frank just laughs and does not take it seriously. One of the biggest changes in the film is that Rita becomes more knowledgeable. This shows a total new Rita because she uses her new knowledge to her advantages and can use it to be arrogant and obnoxious to people that do not have such a high standard of knowledge as her. It all started to embrace

when Rita went to summer school and she learnt dozens of new things; but it was when she came back was when the arrogance started.

When Frank asks (once she is back from summer school) her if she has done 'innocence and experience' and Rita replies: 'Of course; you don't do Blake without doing innocence and experience do y'? This shows a bit of arrogance towards Frank as if to say that he should know that you cannot do Blake without doing 'innocence and experience'. This is classified as a change because Rita was never like this and was annoyed with the people who were like that, an example of this was at the start of the play in act one scene one when Rita says to Frank 'What does assonance mean?' and Frank half splutters and gives a short laugh and Rita gets defensive about him laughing at her.

By her being arrogant to people with a lower knowledge span than her, it portrays that she is acting how people used to act to her, she is portraying because she has the knowledge she can act in a certain way which other people can't. Mrs Lyons acts like this to Mrs Johnstone, because she doesn't want to be associated with her because of who she is and where she is from. She only wants to associate with Mrs Johnstone when she knows that Mrs Johnstone is in a rut and is expecting twins.

Mrs Lyons is a very posh character and is very snobbish, I think she would look down and snare at Mrs Johnstone constantly and I think that she hired Mrs. Johnstone for company as she is lonely but she doesn't show her appreciation. Rita didn't understand the books she was studying and writing essays on. This was because what she thought good literature was, had a

different meaning to the 'higher class' and students. They believe it is famous authors etc, while Rita thinks it is about the storyline in the book.

A quotation to show that she doesn't know how to write good essays is from act one scene three when Frank says 'It's your essay. Is it a joke? Is it?' This tells the audience that the essay is awful and Frank doesn't like it at all. This is a change in Rita because at the end of the production, Rita passes her exam and writes essays exceptionally well. Rita even knows how to pronounce authors names properly at the end of the play.

Rita didn't know how to pronounce the authors names and at the beginning of the play in Act one Scene two she said 'Mr E. M Foster' and Frank replies 'Forster'. At the beginning of act two scene two, Rita talks in a peculiar voice because her new flatmate Trish has said 'there is not a lot of point in discussing beautiful literature in an ugly voice.' Rita's voice has turned quite peculiar and is trying to express who she wants to be. This change indicates to the audience that her new voice is awful and that Frank dislikes it very much. A quote to show that Frank dislikes it is: 'Well will you kindly tell Trish that I am not giving a tutorial to a Dalek?' (p83).

This conveys to the audience that Willy Russell has directed Rita to use facial expressions to show her new voice and that her posture is different with her voice speaking in a new tone. This also shows that Frank is using his intelligence using analogy to describe the way Rita's voice is, it also shows the audience that he will not teach her while she has that voice on and that he is getting quite irritated about how much Rita goes on about Trish. This is

the same as how Edward wants to fit in with Mickey, but he does this in an opposite way.