

DIGITAL THEATRE+

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

English Universal Questions



Below is a list of questions and tasks to guide your study of any play, they're intentionally non-specific so that they can be used with a wide variety of plays.

You may need to tailor these to the specific play you are studying, as well as the context of your students.



- 1) Identify a minimum of **three language devices** used in the text/performance (e.g. alliteration, antithesis, assonance, dissonance, imagery, oxymoron, paradox, repetition or rhetoric).
 - Provide specific examples of **how, where, and why** they were **used**.

- 2) Choose any production, play text, or graphic novel on Digital Theatre+.
 - After reading/watching, **identify the main conflict** in the text/production.
 - Then, write about any **contemporary situation(s)** that have the **same conflict** explaining how they **mirror** the conflict within the text/production.

- 3) History has a way of repeating itself. Write about this with reference to the text.
 - Then, think of other plays, books, or films with **historical settings**.
 - What is the **impact** on **modern audiences/readers** of setting a **work of art** in the **past**?

- 4) **Create a full list of characters** in the text/production and then – either gradually, as you work your way through, or in one go, after your first full reading/viewing – **annotate** it with **thumbnail descriptions** (no more than 20 words per person), taking into account what each character says and does, and what others say about them.
 - Then, looking at your thumbnail descriptions, **identify an actor** who has **played a comparable character** in any other play, film, or tv show you're familiar with and cast them in the role. You will need to **justify your choices**, which could include the actor's age, build, looks, voice and perhaps performance style. What makes you think they are a good fit for this role?
 - Once you have compiled your cast, you could **find and print online head and shoulders photographs** of the performers to create a cast **photo gallery**.*

- 5) Determine **one or more themes** or central ideas of a text.





- Analyse in detail its **development** over the course of the text, including how it **emerges** and is **shaped** and **refined** by specific details, such as **setting**, **characterisation** and **plot**.
- 6) **Compare** similar **themes** in a variety of **literary** or **dramatic texts** representing different cultures.
 - 7) Analyse **multiple interpretations** of a story or drama, **evaluating** how each **version interprets** the source text. (Digital Theatre+ has multiple versions of several key titles including *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*).
 - 8) **Research** the time **period** and **historical context** of the play/novel.
 - Create a **timeline** or presentation of the **major events** that occurred (refer to the *Nibroc Trilogy Study Guides* or *Director's Notebooks* on Digital Theatre+ as examples).
 - 9) Charles Darwin's observations of behaviour in nature suggested that organisms adapt to their environment. **Environment** therefore has a determining **role** in **shaping behaviour**. Thinking about your own life answer the following:
 - Do you agree or disagree that we **behave differently** in response to different environments and factors, such as whether we are inside or outside, what time of the day it is, whether we are in a classroom or in our living room, etc.?
 - Is behaviour **entirely determined** by environment, and hereditary?
 - Is there any room for **individual agency** or responsibility?
 - What about the circumstances in the **text** – do the **characters behave differently** in response to **different environments**? Support your opinion with specific examples.
 - 10) Citing evidence from a specific production found on Digital Theatre+, support an **interpretation** of the **artistic choices**, and defend the use of a specific **style**, **form** or **period** to express an intended **message**.

*Adapted from *How to Read, Watch and Write about Plays: The Tempest*

