

Cast
Whit/Boss
Crooks
Curley's Wife
Slim
Lennie
Carlson
Curley
George
Candy

Cornelius Booth
Kelsey Brookfield
Heather Christian
Andy Clark
Dyfrig Morris
Simon Holland Roberts
John Trindle
Henry Pettigrew
Johnson Willis

Of Mice and Men

By John
Steinbeck

Director Mark Rosenblatt
Designer Max Jones
Lighting Designer Tim Mitchell
Sound Designer Rich Walsh
Composer Heather Christian
Movement Director Imogen Knight
Dialect Coach Charmian Hoare
Fight Director Paul Benzing
Casting Director Kay Magson
Assistant Director (Birkbeck Trainee) Sadie Spencer
Production Manager Suzi Cabbage
Stage Manager Julie Issott
Deputy Stage Manager Donna Reeves
Assistant Stage Manager Samantha Krylonsky

Rehearsal Room Photography: Jonathan Keenan

For further information regarding the production or activities within this pack, please contact John Dawson (Creative Education Officer)
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The West Yorkshire Playhouse, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UP
Box Office: 0113 213 7700 www.wyp.org.uk

Notes For Classroom Practitioners

The activities within this pack are designed to enhance students' understanding of Steinbeck's novella through exploring the production. These materials can be used prior to watching the play in order to prepare pupils for their visit to the theatre, as a consolidation exercise after they have watched the production, or as standalone activities.

Each activity can be adapted to meet the needs of individual and groups of students. Suggestions regarding how these materials could be used in lessons can be found below. In addition, each activity has a 'Help Box' providing pupils with further guidance. These can be found at the end of each activity.

Activity One Objective: To explore how key characters, themes and events are presented (Pages One to Thirteen of the Activity Pack)

Students should be encouraged to replicate the conventions of scriptwriting (e.g. use of brackets; use of adverbs to describe tone/action etc). They should use the opening section of the novella to inform their choices. For a large or mixed ability group of students, the script could be divided up into sections, with different groups preparing different parts. Some parts of the script present varying degrees of challenge (e.g. heavily reliant upon inferred action or consists of details taken from different sections of the novella, and therefore will require a range of close reading skills) allowing for appropriate differentiation. Students who respond well to kinaesthetic exercises could stage a performance of their completed scripts. The consolidation exercise could be adapted into an extended piece of writing exploring Steinbeck's use of language.

Activity Two Objective: To explore Steinbeck's use of setting and atmosphere (Pages Fourteen to Sixteen of the Activity Pack)

This activity is designed to help students to understand how Steinbeck's technique of using detailed descriptions of the setting reflect key characters and events. A detailed reading and discussion of these parts of the novella (e.g. the opening section) will be necessary. Some students could simply construct an image of the set, whereas more able students could label it in detail using quotations and commenting on more technical production aspects (e.g. sound and lighting). An extended project could be to produce a physical model. For the consolidation activity, more able students could analyse alternative settings within the novella (e.g. the bunk house or the barn).

Notes For Classroom Practitioners

Activity Three *Objective: To explore the theme of power within the novella* (Page Seventeen of the Activity Pack)

For this activity, students will have to draw upon their knowledge of issues relating to the wider context of the novella. It may be more appropriate to ask students to focus upon a few of these concepts (e.g. race and gender); alternatively, different groups of students could construct their hierarchical diagram based upon different concepts (e.g. Group 1 could look at social attitudes, Group 2 to look at power etc). Students could also be asked to find textual evidence to support their views. This could form the basis of a whole class discussion, or be used to create a classroom display.

Activity Four *Objective: To explore alternative interpretations of key characters* (Pages Eighteen and Nineteen of the Activity Pack)

This activity is designed to encourage students to consider the different interpretations of the character of Curley's Wife in the novella, and to compare these with how she is represented in the production. Extract 2 could be more challenging (e.g. inferring her motivations based upon the stage directions) and may therefore present some opportunities for differentiation and peer mentoring (e.g. paired work with students looking at an extract each). Students could have a class debate based upon their findings, or their notes could be used to prepare them for an extended piece of writing exploring the presentation of Curley's Wife.

Writing About The Essay *Objective: To revise key skills for extended writing* (Pages Twenty to Twenty Two of the Activity Pack)

This section contains some useful guidance that can be shared with students in order to prepare them for writing a response to an assignment question. They should be used in conjunction with the appropriate Assessment Criteria.

The Activity Pack can either be compiled as a work book for students (a front cover with promotional materials from the production has been provided), or individual activities can be accessed and printed off separately.

WY PLAY HOUSE



NAME:

'OF MICE AND MEN' BY JOHN STEINBECK

**The West Yorkshire Playhouse
28th Feb - 29th March 2014**

John Steinbeck's iconic novella is driven by one of literature's most enduring and unlikely friendships.

George and Lennie are migrant workers, one smart, the other strong, drifting from town to town across the vast dustbowl of California. Together they've cooked up a plan to escape, a dream of freedom - saving their nickels to buy a small farm of their own and live off the fat of the land.

But when they're hired on a ranch close to the Salinas River, their dream slowly and unexpectedly unravels amidst the simmering tensions of the lonely ranchers around them.

ACTIVITY PACK BY A. L. BURNETT

Activity One



Henry Pettigrew (George) and Dyfrig Morris (Lennie) in rehearsals

Act I Scene i: A sandy bank of the Salinas River

Using your knowledge of the text, complete the play script below by adding stage directions. An example has been done for you:

GEORGE: Lennie, for God's sake, don't drink so much. Lennie, you hear me! You gonna be sick like you was last night. *(irritably, grabbing LENNIE's shoulder)*

LENNIE: That's good. You drink some, George. You drink some too.

GEORGE: I ain't sure it's good water. Looks kinda scummy to me.

LENNIE: Look at them wrinkles in the water, George. Look what I done.

GEORGE: Tastes alright. Don't seem to be runnin' much, though. Lennie, you oughtn' to drink water when it ain't running. You'd drink water out of a gutter if you was thirsty.


 Activity One

GEORGE: God damn it, we could just as well of rode clear to the ranch. That bus driver didn't know what he was talkin' about. "Just a little stretch down the highway," he says. "Just a little stretch" - damn near four miles! I bet he didn't want to stop at the ranch gate... I bet he's too damn lazy to pull up. Wonder he ain't too lazy to stop at Soledad at all! Just a little stretch down the road.

LENNIE: George?

GEORGE: Yeh? What you want?

LENNIE: Where we goin', George?

GEORGE: So you forgot that already, did you? So I got to tell you again! Jeez, you're crazy!

LENNIE: I forgot. I tried not to forget, honest to God, I did!

GEORGE: Okay, okay, I'll tell you again... I ain't got nothing to do. Might just as well spen' all my time tellin' you things. You forgit 'em and I tell you again.

LENNIE: I tried and tried, but it didn't do no good. I remember about the rabbits, George!

Activity One

GEORGE: The hell with the rabbits. You can't remember nothing but them rabbits. You remember settin' in that gutter on Howard Street and watchin' that blackboard?

LENNIE: Oh sure! I remember that... But... Wha'd we do then? I remember some girls come by, and you says -

GEORGE: The hell with what I says! You remember about us going in Murray and Ready's and they give us work cards and bus tickets?

LENNIE: Oh sure, George... I remember that now. George?

GEORGE: Huh?

LENNIE: I ain't got mine. I musta lost it.

GEORGE: You never had none. Think I'd let you carry your own work card?

LENNIE: I thought I put it in my side pocket.

GEORGE: Wha'd you take out of that pocket?

LENNIE: Ain't a thing in my pocket.

Lined writing area for student responses.

Activity One

GEORGE: I know there ain't. You got it in your hand now. What you got in your hand?

LENNIE: It's on'y a mouse!

GEORGE: A mouse? A live mouse?

LENNIE: No, just a dead mouse. I didn't kill it. Honest. I found it dead.

GEORGE: Give it here! What do you want of a dead mouse, anyway?

LENNIE: I was petting it with my thumb while we walked along.

GEORGE: Well, you ain't pettin' no mice while you walk with me. Now let's see if you can remember where we're going.

LENNIE: I forgot again.

GEORGE: Jesus Christ! That ranch we're goin' to is right down there about a quarter mile. We're gonna go in and see the boss. Now, look! I'll give him the work tickets, but you ain't gonna say a word. You're just gonna stand there and say nothing. If he finds out what a crazy bastard you are, we won't get no job. But if he sees you work before he hears you talk, we're set. You got that?

LENNIE: Sure George... Sure. I got that.

Lined writing area with 20 horizontal lines for student responses.

Activity One

GEORGE: And you ain't going to do no bad things like you done in Weed neither.

LENNIE: I didn't forget that, you bet.

GEORGE: God, you're a lot of trouble! I could get along so easy and nice, if I didn't have you on my tail. I could live so easy!

LENNIE: Why ain't we going to the ranch to get some supper? They got supper at the ranch.

GEORGE: No reason at all. I just like it here. Tomorrow we'll be going to work. That means we'll be buckin' grain bags. Bustin' a gut liftin' up them bags. Tonight I'm gonna lie right here an' look up!

LENNIE: Ain't we gonna have no supper?

GEORGE: Sure we are. I got three cans of beans in my bundle. I'll open 'em up while you get a fire ready. We'll eat 'em cold.

LENNIE: I like beans with ketchup.

GEORGE: Well, we ain't got no ketchup. You go get wood, and don't you fool around none. All right, give me that mouse.

Lined writing area for student responses.



Activity One

LENNIE: What, George? I ain't got no mouse.

GEORGE: You gonna give me that mouse or do I have to take a sock at you?

LENNIE: I don't know why I can't keep it. It ain't nobody's mouse. I found it layin' right beside the road. I wasn't doin' nothing bad with it. Just stroking it. That ain't bad.

GEORGE: You crazy fool! Thought you could get away with it, didn't you? Blubbering like a baby. Jesus Christ, a big guy like you! Aw, Lennie, I ain't taking it away for meanness. That mouse ain't fresh.

LENNIE: I remember a lady used to give 'em to me, but that lady ain't here no more.

GEORGE: Lady, huh! Don't even remember who that lady was. That was your own Aunt Clara. She stopped giving 'em to you. You always killed 'em.

LENNIE: They was so little. I'd pet 'em and pretty soon they bit my fingers and then I punched their head a little and then they was dead because they was so little. I wish we'd get the rabbits pretty soon, George. They ain't so little.

GEORGE: To hell with the rabbits! Come on, let's eat!

A series of horizontal lines for writing, corresponding to the dialogue blocks.

Activity
One

LENNIE: I like 'em with ketchup.

GEORGE: Well, we ain't got any. God Almighty, if I was alone, I could live so easy. I could go get a job and no trouble. And when the end of the month come, I could take my fifty bucks and go into town and get whatever I want. Why, I could stay in a cat-house all night. I could eat any place I want. Order any damn thing.

LENNIE: I didn't want no ketchup.

GEORGE: And what do I got? I got you. You can't keep a job, and you lose me every job I get! You crazy son-of-a-bitch, you keep me in hot water all of the time. You just wanta feel that girl's dress. Well, how the hell'd she know you just wanta feel her dress?

LENNIE: I didn't mean to, George!

GEORGE: Sure you didn't mean to. Alla time it's something you didn't mean. God damn it, I wish I could put you in a cage with a million mice and let them pet you.

LENNIE: I was only foolin', George. I don't want no ketchup. I wouldn't eat no ketchup if it was right here beside me.

GEORGE: When I think of the swell time I could have without you. I go nuts.

Activity One

LENNIE: You want I should go away and leave you alone?

GEORGE: Where the hell could you go?

LENNIE: Well, I could... I could go off in the hills there. Some place I could find a cave. I don't need no nice food with ketchup. I'd lay out in the sun and nobody would hurt me. And if I found a mouse - why, I could keep it. Wouldn't nobody take it away from me.

GEORGE: I been mean, ain't I?

LENNIE: If you don't want me, I can go right in them hills, and find a cave. I can go away any time.

GEORGE: No, look! I was just foolin' ya. 'Course I want you to stay with me. Trouble with mice is you always kill 'em. Tell you what I'll do, Lennie. First chance I get I'll find you a pup. Maybe you wouldn't kill it. That would be better than mice. You could pet it harder.

LENNIE: George?

GEORGE: Huh?

LENNIE: Tell me - like you done before.

GEORGE: Tell you what?

Lined writing area for student responses.

Activity One

LENNIE: About the rabbits.

GEORGE: You get a kick out of that, don't you? All right, I'll tell you. And then we'll lay out our beds and eat our dinner.

LENNIE: Go on, George.

GEORGE: Guys like us that work on ranches is the loneliest guys in the world. They don't belong to no place. They come to a ranch and work up a stake and then they go into town and blow their stake. They ain't got nothin' to look ahead to.

LENNIE: That's it, that's it! Now tell how it is with us.

GEORGE: With us it ain't like that. We got somebody to talk to that gives a damn about us. We don't have to sit in no barroom blowin' in our jack, just because we got no place to go.

LENNIE: But not us! And why? Because... Because I got you to look after me... And you got me to look after you... And that's why! Go on, George!

GEORGE: Some other time.

LENNIE: No, tell how it's going to be!

Lined writing area for student responses.

Activity
One

GEORGE: Okay. Someday we're gonna get the jack together and we're gonna have a little house, and a couple of acres and a cow and some pigs and...

LENNIE: And live off the fat of the land! And have rabbits. Go on, George! Tell about what we're gonna have in the garden. And about the rabbits in the cages. Tell about the rain in the winter... And about the stove and how thick the cream is on the milk, you can hardly cut it. Tell about that, George!

GEORGE: Nuts! I ain't got time for no more. What you gonna say tomorrow when the boss asks you any questions?

LENNIE: I... I ain't gonna say a word.

GEORGE: Good boy. That's fine. Say, maybe you're gittin' better. Lennie, I want you to look around here. Think you can remember this place? The ranch is 'bout a quarter mile up that way. Just follow the river and you can get here.

LENNIE: Sure, I can remember here.

GEORGE: Well, look, Lennie, if you just happen to get in trouble, I want you to come right here and hide in the brush.

Activity One

LENNIE: Hide in the brush.

GEORGE: Hide in the brush until I come for you. Think you can remember that?

LENNIE: Sure I can, George. Hide in the brush till you come for me!

GEORGE: But you ain't gonna get in no trouble. Because if you do I won't let you tend the rabbits.

LENNIE: I won't get in no trouble. I ain't gonna say a word.

GEORGE: You got it. Anyways, I hope so.

Activity One: Help Box

Use the original text. How has Steinbeck described the characters' actions, tone of voice, thoughts or feelings?

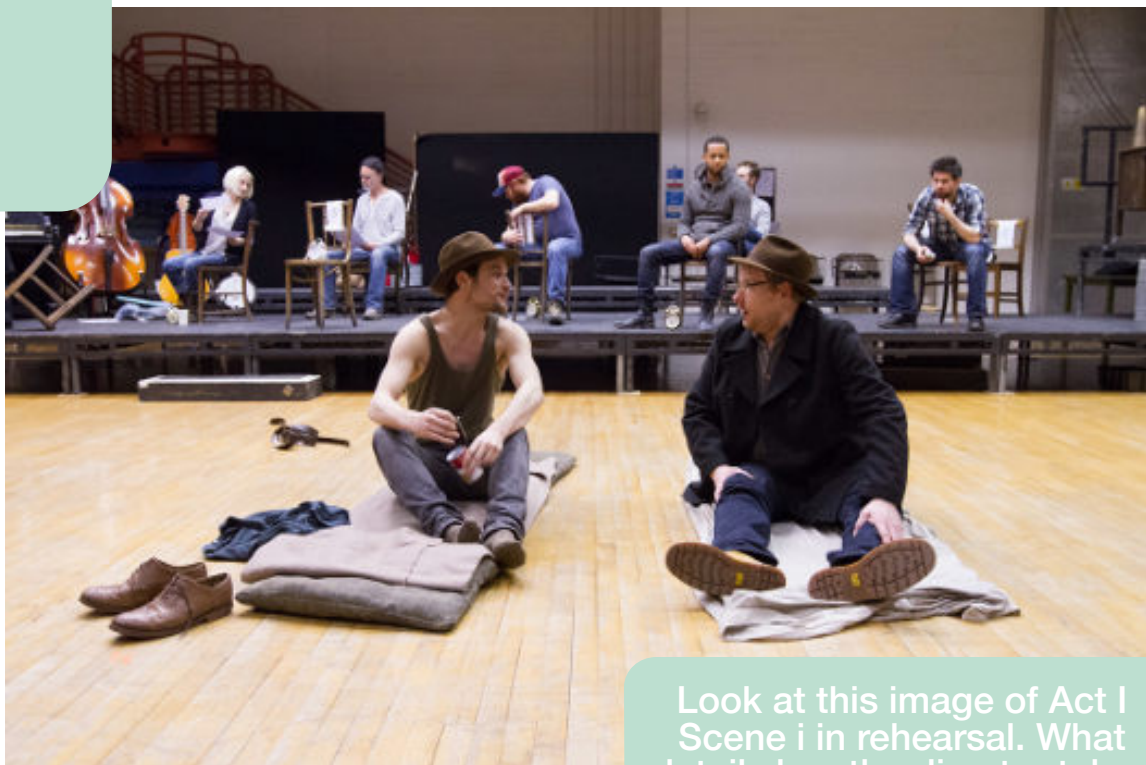
Use adverbs to show how the characters may say or do something.

Look for inferred action. This is where the dialogue suggests what actions or props might be needed in the scene.

Use your imagination and add in your own ideas. If you were the director, how would you portray this scene?

Lined writing area for student responses.

Activity One Consolidation Exercise



Look at this image of Act I Scene i in rehearsal. What details has the director taken from the original text? What other details would you add in? Label the image with your ideas.

What are the similarities and differences between this extract from the play script and the original text?

Activity One Consolidation Exercise

Which of the key themes in the novella are introduced in this opening scene from the play script? Create a spider diagram here:

Which key events in the novella are foreshadowed in this opening scene from the play script?

Handwriting lines for the foreshadowing question.

What impressions of the characters are created by the way that they speak in this opening scene from the play script? Give an example and explain it. Are similar impressions created in the original text? If so, how?

GEORGE: _____

Handwriting lines for George's dialogue.

This suggests that _____

Handwriting lines for the analysis of George's dialogue.

LENNIE: _____

Handwriting lines for Lennie's dialogue.

This suggests that _____

Handwriting lines for the analysis of Lennie's dialogue.

Activity Two



Model of the set, designed by Max Jones

Look back over the descriptions of the bank of the Salinas River in the novella. How has Steinbeck presented the setting in these extracts? Record any significant quotations below:

A vertical spiral notebook binding is shown on the left side of the page, with the metal spiral running down the center of the page.

Activity Two

Based on your reading of the text, design your own stage set for the clearing near the Salinas River below. Label your diagram with production notes showing the details that you will include and your lighting and sound choices:

Activity Two: Help Box

What physical details about the setting does Steinbeck include? What time of day is it? What sounds are used (or hinted at) in the description? What kind of atmosphere was Steinbeck trying to create? Use your imagination and include some details of your own.

Activity Two
Consolidation
Exercise

Steinbeck often uses the setting in his novella to add to our understanding of key characters, events or themes. Using the extracts that you have just explored (or some others of your own), complete the diagram below by selecting short, relevant quotations, analysing the effect of Steinbeck's use of language (including language devices) and commenting upon Steinbeck's use of setting:

Quotation: _____

Quotation: _____

Language Analysis:

Language Analysis:

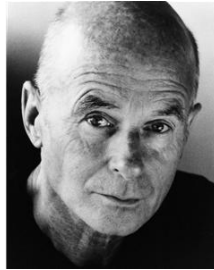
Steinbeck's Use of Setting:

Steinbeck's Use of Setting:

Activity Two: Help Box
Ask yourself: What atmosphere is being created here? Does this description come directly prior to a significant point in the plot? Does the atmosphere reflect the characters' mood or actions? If so, what is it showing us about them?

Activity Three

Many of the characters face difficulties because of the social hierarchy in 1930s America. Rank these characters in the order that you think they would appear in this social hierarchy, with '1' as the 'most important' and '9' being the 'least important'. Be prepared to justify your choices ready for a class discussion:



Candy



Curley



Curley's Wife



George



Carlson



Crooks



Slim



Lennie



Whit

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

Activity Three: Help Box

When completing this activity, you need to take into account issues regarding race, power, status, social attitudes and gender.

Activity Four

Read these two extracts from the play script:



EXTRACT 1: Act II Scene i

The bunk house. George, Lennie and Candy have just decided to buy the farm together, when Curley's Wife enters. She has been listening in through the window.

GEORGE: *(sullenly)* If you ain't a tart, what you always hangin' round guys for? You got a house an' you got a man. We don't want no trouble from you.

CURLEY'S WIFE: *(pleadingly)* Sure I got a man. He ain't never home. I got nobody to talk to. I got nobody to be with. Think I can sit home and do nothing but cook for Curley? I want to see somebody. Just see 'em an' talk to 'em. There ain't no women. I can't walk to town. And Curley don't take me to no dances now. I tell you I jus' want to talk to somebody.

GEORGE: *(boldly)* If you're just friendly what you givin' out the eye for an' floppin' your can around?

CURLEY'S WIFE: *(Sadly)* I just wanta be nice.

EXTRACT 2: Act II Scene ii

Crooks' room. Curley's Wife has found George, Lennie, Candy and Crooks talking.

CURLEY'S WIFE: If you didn't sock Curley, who did? *(looks at others, then steps quickly over to LENNIE)* Where'd you get them bruises on your face?

GEORGE: I tell you he got his hand caught in a machine.

LENNIE: *(looks anxiously at GEORGE, miserably)* He caught his han' in a machine.

GEORGE: So get out of here.

CURLEY'S WIFE: *(moves close to LENNIE, speaks softly, note of affection in her voice)* So... It was you. Well... Maybe you're dumb like they say... An' maybe... You're the only guy on the ranch with guts. *(puts hand on LENNIE's shoulder. He looks up in her face and a smile grows on his face. She strokes his shoulder)* You're a nice fella.

GEORGE: *(suddenly leaps at her ferociously, grabs her shoulder and whirls her around)* Listen... You! I tried to give you a break. Don't you walk into nothing! We ain't gonna let you mess up what we're gonna do. You let this guy alone an' get the hell out of here.

CURLEY'S WIFE: *(defiant but slightly frightened)* You ain't telling me what to do. *(BOSS appears in the doorway, stands legs spread, thumbs hooked over his belt)* I got a right to talk to anybody I want to.

GEORGE: Why, you - *(GEORGE, furious, steps close - hand is raised to strike her. She covers a little. GEORGE stiffens, seeing BOSS, frozen in position. Others see BOSS, too. She retreats slowly. GEORGE's hand drops slowly to his side)*

Activity
Four
Consolidation
Exercise

What differences did you notice between these extracts and the original novella?

Is the impression of Curley's Wife in Extract 1 of the play script different from the one created in Extract 2? If so, how?

In your opinion, is Curley's Wife a tragic victim of circumstances or an opportunistic troublemaker? Use evidence from the original text to support your views for a class discussion. Use the space below to prepare your argument:

Writing About The Text



Director Mark Rosenblatt and actor Henry Pettigrew (George)

Writing About The Text

Remember that there are some differences between the play script and Steinbeck's novella. Make sure that you focus your essay upon the original text, but use your experience of watching and reading the play to explore new and alternative interpretations.

Read your assignment question carefully. Decode it by underlining any key words so that you don't miss any important pieces of information. Make sure that you fully understand what the focus of the question is before you begin planning or writing your answer.

Decide what the most relevant parts of the text are in relation to your question. Be selective and only choose sections that will help you to construct a strong argument.

Plan your answer before you begin to write it. This only needs to be a spider diagram or a brief paragraph plan.

Remember to leave enough time to thoroughly check and proof read your answer once you have finished writing.

Selecting Evidence

The golden rule is 'say a lot about a little'. This means you should be selecting short, relevant quotations that will provide you with plenty of opportunities to analyse the text in detail.

Look for quotations which contain language devices or techniques. This will allow you to show off your knowledge of the writer's craft.

Try to use quotations which will allow you to talk about wider themes and context.

Avoid using quotations to simply explain what is happening in the text.

'I won't get to
tend the rabbits'

' 'Cause we ain't like
them other guys. They
ain't got nobody to give
a damn about them. I
got you an' you got me'

'like a terrier'

Which is the best
choice of
evidence?

Structuring Your Answer

Any introductions that you write should be brief and get straight to the point. Make sure that you include the title of the text and the name of the author; address the question that you will be answering; summarise the plot (in no more than a couple of sentences); and allude to what your key arguments will be.

Focus each paragraph upon a key point. Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence which clearly tells the reader what that particular paragraph will be about. Use connectives to show the number of points that you are making, or to show differences and similarities.

Integrate your quotations into your answer. Use quotation marks and place them within a full sentence. Use the connectives 'indicates', 'suggests', 'shows' and 'emphasises' to link them to your analysis. Talk about the impact of the writer's use of language, and identify the use of any language devices.

Develop your analysis by referring to wider themes and contexts. Integrate additional quotations where you need to. Keep linking back to your assignment question.

When you have to write a conclusion, don't add any new information that you haven't already discussed in the main body of your answer. Briefly summarise your key points and give your overall judgement. Use connectives like 'in conclusion' or 'in summation' to show the reader that you have reached the end of your argument.