

## PROCESS



# BLOOD BROTHERS

## ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, SKILLS



<p>Script (book) is written</p> <p>Music was added to the script</p>	<p>Willy Russell wrote the script based on a story he read as a child "about two babies switched at birth" as a school play for pupils at Fazakerley Comprehensive School in Liverpool 1981. He later wrote and added the music and lyrics and this was first performed at the Liverpool Playhouse in 1983.</p>
<p>Auditions and casting sessions</p>	<p>Actors would prepare for an audition by rehearsing parts of a script and learning a song. The Director and Musical Director would audition the actors and then make casting decisions. They would consider actor's experiences, skills, actual audition pieces, chemistry between actors, ability to use a Liverpudlian accent</p>
<p>Research</p>	<p>The Director would begin breaking down the script and analyse and explore content. Director would research Liverpool in the 1960s (clothes, employment etc). The Director would begin to develop a vision of how he wanted the production to look. Actors would also begin to research their role.</p>
<p>Production Meeting</p>	<p>Director shares his vision with the team consisting of the creative team (set and props design, costume and make up designers) and technical team (the lighting and sound designers).</p>
<p>A rehearsal schedule is organised and planned and given to whole company (cast and crew)</p>	<p>The Director plans out the rehearsals. Rehearsals would be conducted scene by scene in chronological order so everyone can see how the story develops / ends. Dates for technical and dress rehearsals would also be planned ahead of the first performances.</p>
<p>Read through</p>	<p>The cast, Director and Musical Director gather at first rehearsal; a read through of the entire script from beginning to end. This is the first opportunity for everyone to meet and begin to form bonds. Each actor reads their lines, for example the character playing Mickey would read all of Mickey's lines out loud. The actors use some of their research when reading the lines, for example ... The Director shares his vision of Blood Brothers with the cast. Some Directors use Brecht's influence (multi-rolling, eg narrator plays milk man, catalogue man and changes happen on stage.</p>
<p>Rehearsals</p>	<p>Rehearsals are usually organised in chronological order so that everyone sees story develop. Some rehearsals would require the whole cast, for scenes like the beginning where we see the end of the play in the courtroom with the song 'Tell me it's not true' and some may just need one or two actors eg Mickey and Eddie. Actors would use their scripts in rehearsal to start with but would then go 'off book' after a few weeks. Lines would be given by stage manager if forgotten. The Director blocks the scenes (tells the actors where to stand / where to move to, and gives advice on how to say lines or how to react. After full cast rehearsal the Director reads out his notes to the entire cast and explain what was good and what needs to improve or change. The Musical Director would run separate musical rehearsals so actors can learn the songs / harmonies before trying to act and sing together in a full rehearsal on stage. Dance and Music rehearsals may be held in different places such as dance studios.</p>
<p>Costume fittings</p>	<p>During the rehearsal period actors would attend costume fittings in order to check that sizes of costumes fit the actors. It would then be the costume designers' job to make adjustments / amendments to the costumes before the next fitting.</p>
<p>Technical Rehearsal</p>	<p>The full cast and crew walk through the entire show in performance order making sure that every lighting cue, sound effect and microphone is working properly and is used at the correct time. The actors do not act or sing as this rehearsal is just for the technical team (lighting and sound). The cast will be in costume so that lights and microphones can be adjusted if necessary. Usually lots of things go wrong at technical rehearsals and it's the job of the tech team to problem solve and fix issues.</p>
<p>Dress Rehearsal</p>	<p>This is a full run of the show before the first performance. The show is performed from start to finish with no stops. Sometime an audience is invited in order to provide feedback to the Director before the first performance. The Director watches the show from the theatre seats and makes notes. These are read to the whole company at the end of the performance.</p>

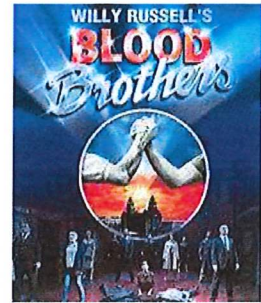
## Script synopsis

Description of storyline and what happens in the work

## Initial thoughts and First Impressions

Write about the moments you found interesting, moving and enjoyable

(Avoid making negative points; demonstrate an appreciation for the professional work and why it would reach a large audience)



**Style / Genre** – Originally a play, but adapted into a musical; in style of Epic Theatre (could link also to genre of tragedy)

Explain **all** terms book musical, epic theatre, tragedy – what are the general features of these styles?

eg. a musical usually has a story that is punctuated by songs and features dialogue in between the songs.

## Practitioners influences - Brecht

Give a brief outline of who Brecht was and how and why he created this style of theatre. What were his beliefs? What did he want his audiences to feel? How did he intend to do this? He was against naturalism and believed that if the audience became emotionally engaged with the characters onstage, then they lost the ability to think and judge. He wanted audiences to remain objective and not get emotionally involved so they could make considered and rational judgement about the social or political issues in his work - *verfremdungseffekt*.

## Links to Repertoire – An important section!

Just from opening the script and looking at the format... What links can you make to the style / genre section?

Explain in detail how elements of the work link to the style

- Use of a narrator (reminds people they are watching a play and breaks fourth wall. Narrator often tells audience what happens before they see it)
- Start of play reveals fate of twins (starts with the ending) – removes the what ifs from the play, allowing audience to focus on themes and issues of social class rather than storyline)
- Lots of detail in stage directions
- Minimal props
- Actors change costumes on stage
- Political / social message (nature versus nurture)
- Stereotypical characters – representations of characters from different classes and adults playing the young boys
- Multi-rolling narrator sometimes plays the milkman, catalogue man etc
- Is Spass included via use of Mickey's monologue?

## Themes & Context

- Social class, Education, Nature vs Nurture, Fate and destiny, Growing up, Men and Women, money, superstitions, relationships between characters (links with the brief)
- When / where is it set? – what was it like in Liverpool during 1950s – 70s (culture / education/ employment / social classes etc – try to explain where Willy Russel got inspiration from and what he based ideas on

## Staging / Lighting / Costume Design

Add a range of images and explain / annotate each one – why has director chosen this? Connect it to style / genre

## Performance Purpose

- Give info about the background – why was it written, when, who for? How did it develop? Where did inspiration come from?
- Purpose: To educate, inform, entertain, provoke, challenge viewpoints, raise awareness, celebrate?
- What is the audience supposed to feel: excited, thrilled, scared, educated, entertained, emotionally moved, relaxed etc

## Roles and Responsibilities (A2)

- Explain the job roles required for Blood Brothers and describe the responsibilities and skills required for each one (use specific examples from the work)

Participate in workshops and classes to develop knowledge and understanding of the processes, techniques and approaches that contribute to performance material.

(Focus on the journey that the work takes from the initial ideas to the performance)

#### In the beginning....

- Describe the process Blood Brothers followed from being an idea to becoming a hit musical on Broadway and West End: The script was written by Willy Russell for a school play at Fazakerley Comprehensive School in Liverpool November 1981 and then he wrote a score (music) and developed it into a musical in 1983 for first performance at the Liverpool Playhouse.
- Explain how it went from this performance in Liverpool (home town of scriptwriter) to major world wide success! What is it about this play / musical that appeals to audiences / actors? Any facts or figures about numbers of performances / quotes from reviewers?
- For each production or tour, there would be auditions and casting, Read through of the script with actors, then rehearsals probably in chronological order. (Explain what happened at each stage of rehearsal)
- Different rehearsals (production stage (decide on props, costume, staging), technical rehearsal, dress rehearsal, performance, post-performance evaluation / review)

TIP: show your knowledge of each stage (what happens and why?)

**TIP: Explain the skills and responsibilities used at each stage by the various roles (director – what is their role during read through / rehearsals and recordings?)**

**Actors – what are they expected to have done prior to scene rehearsals for stage musical? Need to be physically fit, have good singing voices and vocal skills, good breath control, and learn any blocking / choreography quickly**

#### Where to start?

-Describe our **process** – read through whole script, pausing at times to discuss storyline and characters (Some of you have studied this also is English – mention this and what you have done, some of you have researched / watched more clips in your own time – mention this and why you did it, what you gained? Watched stage version (recorded at The Venice Theatre under direction of Allan Kollar (look up on You Tube for list of production team (job roles and names) **Give own opinions about this performance and individual actors' portrayal of their characters, especially sections where men play boys (links to Brecht's epic theatre)**

- Nature versus Nurture lesson (**exploration of themes in the play**). Practical activities using levels to show authority (master and servant) – links to social class; discussion of how Mickey's and Eddie's lives are different and why- links to idea of nature versus nurture, read through and rehearsal of monologue (Mickey and Eddie or Mrs Johnstone and Mrs Lyons to show idea of social class and task was to use levels to show authority and social class.) – performance, film, and evaluate.

- **Casting and read through of chosen scenes- discussion with actors about characters. (OR completed role on the wall sheets for Mickey and Eddie and Mrs Johnstone and Mrs Lyons to show costume and how this could be used to show social class (why? – responded to stimulus (script) to get ideas for performance – how did you try to keep your performance close to Brecht's idea of Epic Theatre?)**

Performed the scenes to teacher (**every director will have a different interpretation**) **What is the role of the teacher / director here? Did anyone else direct?** (explain what is needed for a rehearsal - stage and space laid out correctly and constant use of script and stage directions)

(explain what is required of actors – learning lines, use of correct mannerisms, use of props and staging, good vocal, singing and dance skills)

- **(Compare our version of this scene to the professional one (staging/ set / props / acting skills / choreography required and success!)**

#### Linking back to the Brief – Relationships

Consider how the relationships are presented by writer / director / actors themselves or you (use of spatial awareness / blocking in song, use of staging / specific words – don't forget to give examples)