

Brussels Study Tour 2019

K-12 Teacher Unit Planning Template

Name: Trish Vicino		Unit Plan: 5 lessons / IB English A (11 th grade)
Unit Title:	Exploring Brexit Through Carol Ann Duffy's Play <i>My Country</i>	
Unit Narrative:	Brexit is complex subject; the background, events, and current status of the conflict will be explored as a precursor to synthesizing Carol Ann Duffy's literary treatment of it in her play, <i>My Country</i> .	
Standards:	Language A: Literature Subject Brief: https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/recognition/1_languagea hl 2011.pdf	
Objectives		
→ Students will gain a working knowledge of Brexit as necessary background to <i>My Country</i> , analyze how it informs their perception of the play, and discuss the piece as an example of verbatim theater.		
Big Ideas		
→ Brexit as a defining issue in English and European history, Carol Ann Duffy, the former poet laureate of the United Kingdom, dramatizing it with Rufus Norris, verbatim theater (Verbatim theater is a specific type of documentary theater that uses recordings or transcripts of interviews conducted outside a theatrical context as the raw material for a dramatic performance) as an emerging genre of drama.		
Essential Questions		
→ What can be learned about Brexit through an analysis of <i>My Country</i> ?		
Learning Acquisition and Assessment		
Students will know... (content/concepts)	Students will be able to... (skills, performance tasks)	
→ Brexit, European Union, Teresa May, Boris Johnson, Carol Ann Duffy, Rufus Norris, verbatim theater, dramatic chorus	→ comprehend the play and the terms surrounding it, discuss Brexit as its driving force, and comment on the effectiveness of verbatim theater as its chosen approach	
Formative Assessments	Summative Assessments	
→ Term review, exit questions, student-led discussion	→ Quiz on terms, critical response essay, <i>My Country</i> review, verbatim theater dialogue	
Learning Activities (1 week – 5 days): Lesson introduction, body, and closing		
Day 1	→ BREXIT: Who, what, when, where, why, and how	
Day 2	→ Carol Ann Duffy & <i>My Country</i> Background	
Day 3	→ <i>My Country</i> as Verbatim Theater: Reading & Examples	
Day 4	→ <i>My Country</i> : Response, Analysis, & Discussion	
Day 5	→ <i>My Country</i> Review, Performance, & Verbatim Theater Dialogue	
Resources and Materials		
→ Copies of <i>My Country</i> , background articles on Brexit, Duffy, and the play		

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Name: Trish Vicino		Lesson: 1 of 5 / IB English A (11 th grade)	
Lesson Title:	BREXIT: Who, what, when, where, why, and how		
Lesson Narrative:	The basics of BREXIT will be provide, analyzed, and discussed from multiple perspectives, including a close look at the initial vote within Britain, Scotland, and Wales. Rationale for both sides will be closely analyzed along with developments through present day.		
Standards:	Language A: Literature Subject Brief: https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/recognition/1_languagea_hl_2011.pdf		
Objective			
→ Students will grasp more detailed information about Brexit as the defining issue of <i>My Country</i> and understand both sides of the ongoing conflict within the UK.			
Big Ideas			
→ Brexit as a divisive factor in the UK among people of different regions, ethnicities, education levels, and socioeconomic status.			
→ Brexit as new territory for the European Union and how the issue has been and is being handled.			
→ Brexit as an issue in which both opposing sides may have legitimate claims and concerns.			
Essential Questions			
→ What led to Brexit and is it a legitimate response for the UK?			
→ How did Brexit begin, and what is the situation of the issue now?			
→ How will the legitimate claims and concerns of both opposing sides be resolved?			
→ What will be the EU's role in the ultimate Brexit decision?			
Learning Acquisition and Assessment			
Students will know... (content/concepts)		Students will be able to... (skills, performance tasks)	
→ Brexit, European Union, United Kingdom, Teresa May, Boris Johnson		→ comprehend the particulars and rationale of Brexit before applying it to different frameworks.	
Formative Assessments		Summative Assessments	
→ Class discussion		→ Class debate: stay or go	
Learning Activities			
Students will first be asked for pre-knowledge on Brexit. A detailed look at the basics will be provided with supporting materials explaining the who, what, when, where, why, and how (see resources). After a quick review for comprehension, voting differences within the UK and the EU's role in Brexit will be focused on before a timeline bringing students up to the present day will be read/discussed. As a culminating activity, and a pre-cursor to understanding the play, students will be assigned to a "stay" or "go" side and will briefly collaborate before engaging in a mock debate over staying in or leaving the EU and the main issues of each opposing side.			
Resources and Materials			
→ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhic4cUYdgc - Brexit Explained in Simple Terms video			
→ https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/15/world/europe/brexit-uk.html - Brexit NY Times article			
→ https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily-videos/unsure-how-to-teach-brexit-heres-the-latest/ - PBS article & video			
→ https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-46318565 - BBC updated basics			
→ https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-36616028 - region map/chart results			
→ https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/brexit/results - table results			

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Name: Trish Vicino		Lesson 2 of 5 / IB English A (11 th grade)	
Lesson Title:	Carol Ann Duffy & <i>My Country</i> Background		
Lesson Narrative:	Carol Ann Duffy is a fascinating and contemporary figure in British literature, serving as the former Poet Laureate of the UK. Her biography will be explored along with her rationale for co-writing <i>My Country</i> and her response to its production, critical response, and perspective on Brexit.		
Standards:	Language A: Literature Subject Brief: https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/recognition/1_language_a_hl_2011.pdf		
Objectives			
→ Students will become more familiar with Duffy as a poet/writer and analyze her as a playwright exploring contemporary issues.			
Big Ideas			
→ Duffy as the first openly bi-sexual poet laureate and her diversity as a modern writer (poems, plays, children’s books, etc.)			
→ Duffy’s style of writing and her influences and inspirations.			
→ Duffy as both a critical and commercial success and her legacy as a poet laureate of the UK.			
→ My Country as a response to Brexit and the framework of its dramatic approach.			
Essential Questions			
→ What is Duffy’s legacy as a former poet laureate?			
→ How can Duffy’s writing/poetic style be described, and what drives her a writer?			
→ What is My Country’s particular approach to Brexit, and how does it utilize dramatic devices?			
Learning Acquisition and Assessment			
Students will know... (content/concepts)	Students will be able to... (skills, performance tasks)		
→ Carol Ann Duffy, Andrew Marvel, poet laureate, poetic diversity, critical vs. commercial success.	→ understand Duffy’s approach, diversity, and style before examining <i>My Country</i> as a dramatic production.		
Formative Assessments	Summative Assessments		
→ Class discussion, <i>My Country</i> predictions	→ Duffy style paragraph		
Learning Activities			
→ Students will be provided with a biography of Carol Ann Duffy and will examine her heritage, poetic accomplishments, and role as poet laureate. They will then discuss her diversity and have a chance to quickly review some of her best-known poems. Based on their new understanding of Duffy as a contemporary writer, they will make predictions on her Brexit play and review the basic framework and concept of <i>My Country</i> as a modern response to Brexit. Finally, they will draft a paragraph discussing what they learned about both Duffy and the play.			
Resources and Materials			
→ https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/carol-ann-duffy - Duffy background			
→ https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poet/carol-ann-duffy/ - Duffy publications			
→ https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/plays/my-country-a-work-in-progress-iiid-178257 - intro to the style and concept of <i>My Country</i> .			

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Name: Trish Vicino		Lesson 3 of 5 / IB English A (11 th grade)	
Lesson Title:	<i>My Country</i> as Verbatim Theater: Reading and Examples		
Lesson Narrative:	My Country is a response to Brexit but also an example of verbatim theater, a relatively new subgenre of drama that incorporates real dialogue and response and is more formally defined as a specific type of documentary theatre that uses recordings or transcripts of interviews conducted outside a theatrical context as the raw material for a dramatic performance.		
Standards:	Language A: Literature Subject Brief: https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/recognition/1_language_a_hl_2011.pdf		
Objective			
→ Students will read and critically respond to <i>My Country</i> as an example of the emerging subgenre of verbatim theater.			
Big Ideas			
→ Verbatim theater as an emerging dramatic genre and its characteristics.			
→ <i>My Country</i> as a modern example of verbatim theater and how it incorporates direct word.			
→ The success (or failure) of the play as an example of verbatim theater.			
Essential Questions			
→ How does <i>My Country</i> incorporate verbatim theater, and is its approach successful?			
→ What does this particular feature add to – or take away from – the dramatic production?			
→ Has verbatim theater been previously utilized as a dramatic subgenre, or is it a new approach?			
→ What does the subgenre of verbatim theater tell us about the society it depicts and quotes from?			
Learning Acquisition and Assessment			
Students will know... (content/concepts) → verbatim theater, subgenre	Students will be able to... (skills, performance tasks) → identify the defining features of verbatim theater and then analyze how it operates – and with what degree of success – within Duffy's play.		
Formative Assessments → Verbatim theater web research	Summative Assessments → Critical paragraph on success/failure of the approach		
Learning Activities			
→ Students will first perform some general internet research on verbatim theater to enhance their understanding of its background, history, and what the genre incorporates. Results will be discussed and compiled into a class document. Sections of the play strongly incorporating this approach will then be read out loud in class prior to students doing a paired close read on a two-page section to focus more closely and critically on the technique as well as to gauge their responses. Quotes from the critical article Pairs will give feedback on success or failure of the actual dialogue and comments will further be discussed. The class will then develop a synthesis response reflecting their opinion on this dramatic device within Duffy's play.			
Resources and Materials			
“Divided by a Common Language”: The Use of Verbatim in Carol Ann Duffy and Rufus Norris' <i>My Country</i> ; A Work in Progress” available at: https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0787/8/1/58/pdf			

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Name: Trish Vicino		Lesson 4 of 5 / IB English A (11 th grade)	
Lesson Title:		<i>My Country</i> : Response and Analysis	
Lesson Narrative:		Now that they are familiar with the issue, author, content, and concept of the play, students will now have a chance to synthesize to it as a response to Brexit, a play by an author who is primarily a poet, and a dramatic work that was received tepidly by most critics.	
Standards:		Language A: Literature Subject Brief: https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/recognition/1_languagea_hl_2011.pdf	
Objective			
→ Students will critically respond both orally and in writing to the play and show synthesis of previous material in their approach.			
Big Ideas			
→ <i>My Country</i> as a play co-written by a well-known poet and poetic influences within the dialogue			
→ The success or failure of <i>My Country</i> as a legitimate response to the Brexit crisis.			
→ The lukewarm critical support for the play, which was received enthusiastically yet tepidly by most critics and viewers.			
Essential Questions			
→ What are Duffy's specific poetic influences upon the dialogue of the play, and do they add or detract from it as a dramatic production?			
→ Does <i>My Country</i> offer a successful response to the Brexit crisis, and what are some of its possible strengths and weaknesses?			
→ Why was the play anticipated yet mostly received as mediocre by many critics, and is this response justified?			
Learning Acquisition and Assessment			
Students will know... (content/concepts)		Students will be able to... (skills, performance tasks)	
→ poetic devices, creative responses to Brexit, drama critic		→ respond favorably or unfavorably to <i>My Country</i> and compare responses to those of several critical reviews of the play	
Formative Assessments		Summative Assessments	
→ poetic devices list, class discussion		→ "Yay or Nay Statement" on <i>My Country</i>	
Learning Activities			
→ Students will first review several poetic devices by listing prior knowledge, which will briefly be reviewed. The class will then focus on Duffy's influence upon the play and closely read pieces of dialogue that seem closer to poetry than drama. Students will then discuss the success or failure of the play to appropriately respond to Brexit prior to reviewing several critical articles/videos focusing on weaknesses of the production. They will perform their own internet research to locate an additional critical review and will use these primary sources to draft a personal review expressing his/her overall opinion on the production.			
Resources and Materials			
→ http://theconversation.com/my-country-a-play-about-brexit-that-tries-to-break-the-bubble-but-disappoints-74388			
→ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FrW0mPuU1c			
→ https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/mar/12/my-country-a-work-in-progress-review-carol-ann-duffy-visits-brexit			

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Name: Trish Vicino		Lesson 5 of 5 / IB English A (11 th grade)	
Lesson Title:		<i>My Country</i> : Review, Performance, and Verbatim Theater Dialogue	
Lesson Narrative:		This final lesson offers students a chance to share a critical opinion on the play, participate in a class reading of a scene, and then create an original verbatim theater concept and write dialogue for it as a final synthesis activity.	
Standards:		Language A: Literature Subject Brief: https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/recognition/1_language_a_hl_2011.pdf	
Objective			
→ Students will successfully respond orally to the play in a variety of ways that incorporate critical thinking and creative thinking.			
Big Ideas			
→ <i>My Country</i> as a play that may resonate more with common audiences rather than critics due to verbatim theater approach.			
→ <i>My Country</i> as first and foremost a vehicle for dialogue performed in front of an audience in a theatrical setting.			
→ Verbatim theater as a dramatic technique that allows freedom, creativity of expression, and a voice for the common citizen.			
Essential Questions			
→ What is the difference between the critical and common approach/response to the play, and why?			
→ How does <i>My Country</i> embody and reflect the genre of contemporary theater?			
→ How does verbatim theater promote a different approach to dramatic conventions, and in what ways can this be most successfully utilized?			
Learning Acquisition and Assessment			
Students will know... (content/concepts)		Students will be able to... (skills, performance tasks)	
→ BBC, <i>The Guardian</i> , dramatic conventions, read through.		→ Critically respond to the play, successfully participate within a scene reading, and create an original piece of verbatim theater on a contemporary issue.	
Formative Assessments		Summative Assessments	
→ Personal opinion and scene reading of play		→ Original verbatim theater dialogue (1 page)	
Learning Activities			
→ Students will first have a chance to paraphrase his/her reaction/response to the play in front of peers who will then respond to the approach. Students will then break into groups of six to conduct a “read through” of selected scene. Finally, the group will collaborate on the creation of a unique piece of verbatim theater on an issue relevant to them and then share this with the class as a synthesis activity.			
Resources and Materials			
→ https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/genres/verbatim-theatre-iid-2551?start=10			
→ https://www.whatsonstage.com/london-theatre/news/verbatim-theatre-blog-notes-from-the-field-46903.html			
→ https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/feb/27/rufus-norris-we-are-living-in-an-age-of-extreme-selfishness			
→ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a0qNEhCly4			