



**PONTEFRACT**  
ACADEMIES TRUST

**OUT OF LESSON**  
**TERM 1**  
**ENGLISH**  
**YEAR 9**



**ENGLISH: YEAR 9**  
**A View from the Bridge**  
**Term 1 8 weeks**



**Aims and objectives of Week 1:**

**Introduction to Arthur Miller and the time period in which he was writing**

**Have a secure understanding of Miller's motivations and life in 1950s  
America.**

**Introduction to immigration and Italian Americans in NYC.**



**Week 1 vocabulary to learn using a dictionary:**

Contextualise

Stimulus

Commentary

Renowned

Illustrious

Cognisance

Immigration

Suburban

Patriarchal

Slum

Androcentric

Empathetically

Emigrated

Migrant

Poverty

Discrimination

Enclaves

Empathy

Characterisation

Portrayal

Inspired

Aptitude

Innovative

Q1. List your 3 favourite authors.

Q2. What is a playwright?

Q3. What is the purpose of a play?

Q4. Name 3 plays by William Shakespeare.

Arthur Miller, in full Arthur Asher Miller, (born October 17, **1915**, **New York**, New York, U.S.—died February 10, **2005**, Roxbury, Connecticut), American playwright, who combined **social awareness** with a **searching concern for his characters' inner lives**. He is best known for **Death of a Salesman (1949)**.

**Quick questions:**


Why are we bothering to learn about this writer?

Why is it important to know about the writers of the texts you study? How might it help?

Look at the basic facts about Miller. Do you have any expectations based on what you read?







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**Task:** Make notes on the information you have been given about Arthur Miller. What themes do you predict Miller will write about, based on the information given?

Miller's first play was about a man facing financial ruin. Written in 1936 while Miller was still a student at the University of Michigan, *No Villain* is about a man who, because of an industrial strike, is in danger of losing everything. This is a theme that Arthur Miller would return to in his later work, such as *Death of a Salesman*. Arthur Miller's first play was written in six days for a competition, which Miller duly won. The play was never performed in Miller's own lifetime; its world premiere took place in London in December 2015, in the centenary year of Miller's birth.

Miller wrote a celebrated essay in support of the Luddite man as a subject for tragedy. In response to negative reviews which his play *Death of a Salesman* received, Miller wrote "Tragedy and the Common Man" (1949), in which he argued that modern tragedy in the theatre should not concern Kings and Queens but ordinary people and their ordinary lives.

Arthur Miller's father lost virtually everything in the 1929 Wall Street crash. Miller's play *Death of a Salesman* (1949) was informed by personal experience: in 1929, when Miller was still a boy, his father lost almost all of his fortune in the famous stock-market crash of 1929. His father had owned a women's clothing business, a chauffeur, and a staff of some 800 people; they lost virtually everything.

Miller was famously married to Marilyn Monroe, and wrote the screenplay for her last film. Miller and Monroe had initially met in 1945 and had a brief affair, but in June 1946 Miller left his first wife and promptly married Monroe. He wrote the script for *The Millers*, which was released in 1952 and starred his wife. During the production of the film their marriage fell apart; Monroe was dead a year later. The film was something of a gross failure for one of its other stars, Bob Clark Gable, who played the male lead, suffered a heart attack and died after completing the film, and died ten days later. The Hollywood connections don't end there: Miller's soon-law is the actor David Day Lewis.

Arthur Miller is considered one of the greatest American playwrights of the 20th century. His best-known plays include *All My Sons*, *The Crucible* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Death of a Salesman*. Miller was born in Yonkers, New York, on October 17, 1915, to an immigrant family of Polish and Jewish descent. His father, Isidore, owned a successful coat manufacturing business, and his mother, Augusta, to whom he was closer, was an educator and an author of novels.

**Task:** As we read a range of facts about Arthur Miller, we are going to unpick what else we need to know about life at that time to fully put into context where he may have got his inspiration and motivation as a writer. Use your A3 context sheet to make notes and show your depth of understanding/ new learning.



Arthur Miller is considered one of the greatest American playwrights of the 20th century. His best-known plays include *All My Sons*, *The Crucible* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Death of a Salesman*. Miller was born in Harlem, New York, on October 17, 1915, to an immigrant family of Polish and Jewish descent. His father, Isidore, owned a successful coat manufacturing business, and his mother, Augusta, to whom he was closer, was an educator and an avid reader of novels.

**You are going to see 5 images from 1950s America and New York.**

**What do they tell you about the time period and it's society and values?**

**For each image you will have one minute to discuss and make some notes before we feedback.**





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- 1) How did the American economy change in the 1950s?
- 2) What caused this change in the economy to happen?
- 3) Which type of businesses did well in 1950s America?
- 4) Why did people start buying houses in the 1950s?
- 5) What are suburbs and what made Americans move to them?
- 6) How were inner city areas affected by the creation of suburbs?



America has always been seen as a 'land of opportunity' where, with hard work, **any dream can be accomplished**. Immigrants from all over the world came to America in the 1800s and 1900s to start a new life and gain new freedoms and opportunities; freedom and opportunity were once foreign and unattainable to many of America's newcomers. However, although many people did achieve their dreams, there were even more people who struggled to survive.





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### Key Questions

What is immigration?

Why might people migrate from one country to another?

Are migrants always treated equally?

### Read Source B

What was 'dust bowl' migration?

Why did they hope for a better life in California?



Writing task:

What types of characters can you see in the images?



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## WAGOL

**What's good?**

**What could be better?**

Hardworking and proud, he stands with the tools of his labour. Dark circles frame his eyes, as he looks into the distance. Lethargically, he tries to plunge his spade into the materials of his trade but it's the last hour of his long shift and the fatigue is taking a hold. Tucking the grimy thumb of one hand into his braces, he uses his other hand to wipe the perspiration that streams from his brow. Wearily, he gets back to it. The clock ticks away the last hour.



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**Aims and objectives of Week 2:**

**Read and unpick the foreword of the text by Philip Seymour Hoffman**

**Have an understanding of stage directions and how to read a play.**

**Explore first impressions of the text and key characters and begin to create plot predictions.**

**Key vocabulary to learn in Week 2 using a dictionary:**

Critical reception

Characterisation

Tenement

Longshoreman

**Task 1:**

**Read the Foreword to the play/ Introduction:**

'We want to keep part of ourselves – the source of our deepest vulnerabilities – hidden, both to ourselves and others.'

Miller knew we 'would empathise as long as his characters allowed us to see how black things had gotten.'

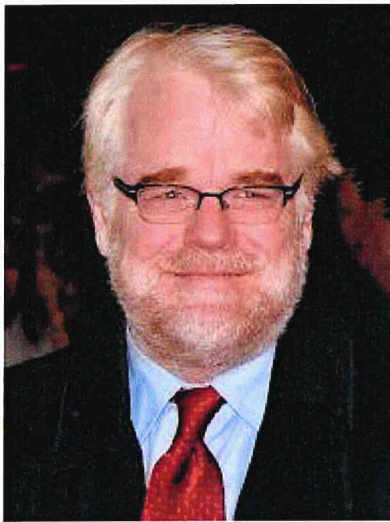
'Miller has been said to be confronting the American Dream and its unattainable ideals.'

...'he is bringing us uncomfortably close to the tragedy that arises not only from our failures alone, but also – and especially – from our own failures being laid bare, and laid bare by our own actions.'

'Miller awakened in me the taste for all that must be – the empathy and love for the least of us, out of which bursts a gratitude for the poetry of these characters and the greatness of their creator.'



Philip Seymour Hoffman was an American actor, director, and producer. Known for playing distinctive supporting and character roles, Hoffman acted in many films from the early 1990s until his death in 2014. He is widely considered to be one of the greatest actors of his generation.



What does he say?  
How does his foreword set us up for reading the play?  
Which parts stand out to you?

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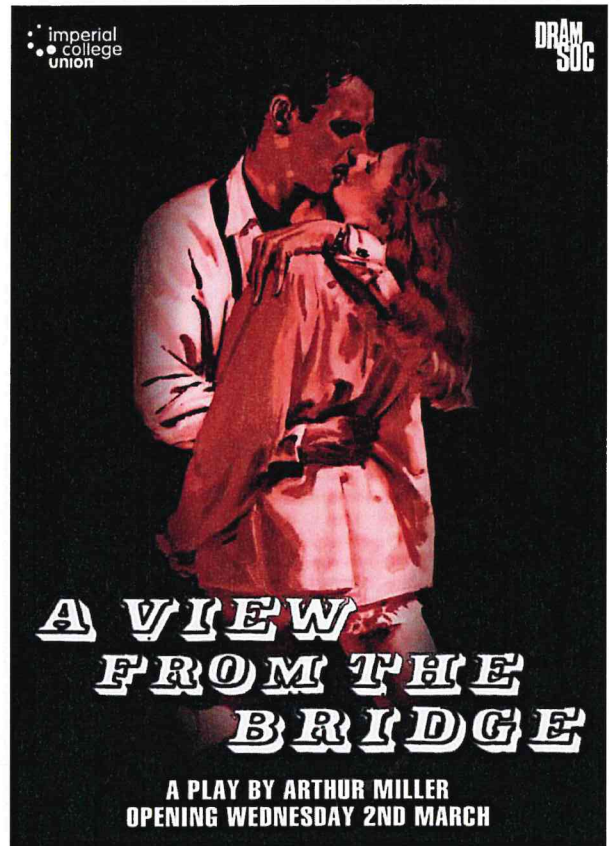
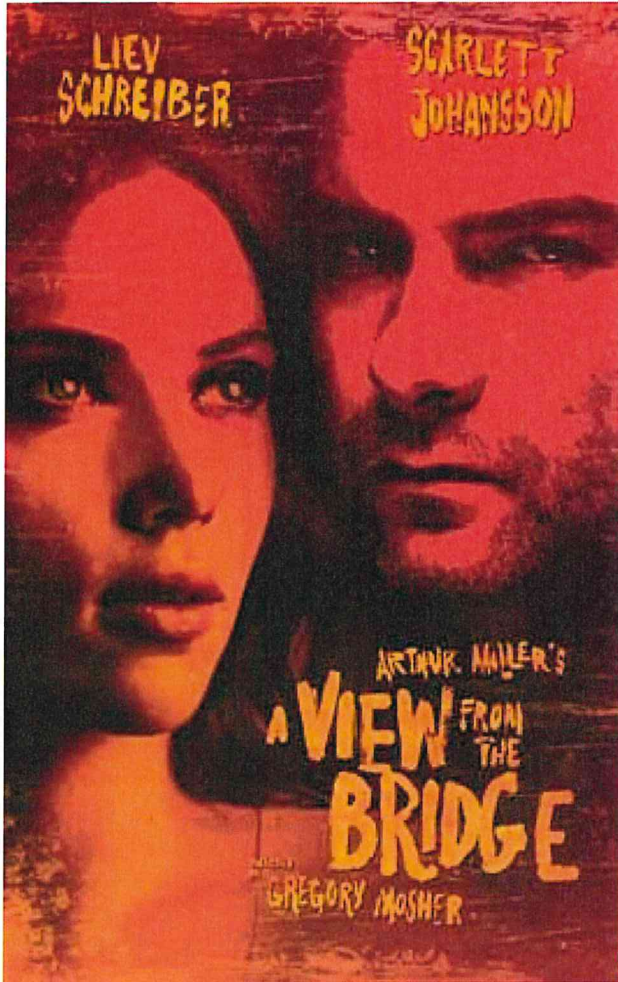
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What can you infer about the play from the following images?



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## What would you expect to find in a Greek Tragedy?



- Classical (or ancient Greek)tragedy
- Dates from around the 5th century BC in Ancient Greece
- The play runs in real time
- There is no change of setting
- The hero is of noble birth and has a great ambition
- By the end of the drama the hero must lose everything
- A classical tragedy has a chorus (a group of people who speak in unison and narrate)
- Evokes emotion and provides catharsis

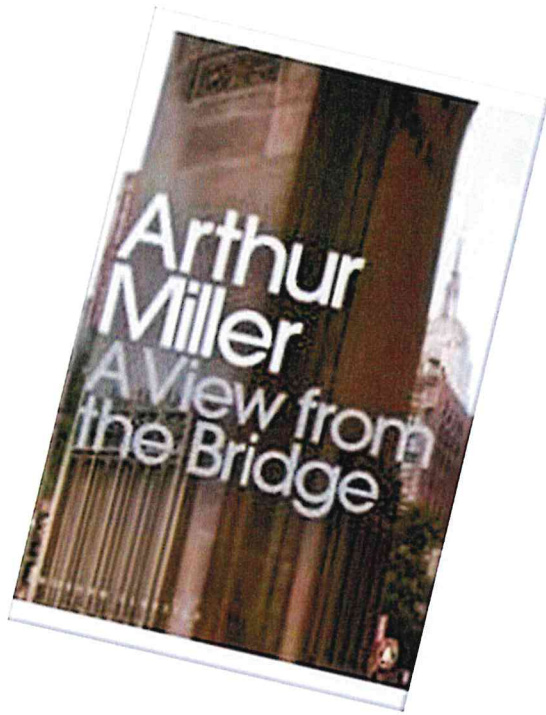
### Can you think of any examples that fit the formula?

A View from the Bridge is a modern tragedy. We will explore this as we read.

Miller shows audiences that the problems of ordinary people are timeless and repeated throughout history. His main protagonist is an ordinary working man, generally good and kind, but with a fatal weakness. As it is a tragedy, it is likely to end in death, and the audience are placed in the same position as the other characters – forced to watch helplessly as Eddie rushes towards his fate.



**Reading task:** Read up to page 3 of A View from the Bridge.



#### Act One

The street and house front of a tenement building. The front is skeletal entirely. The main acting area is the living room–dining room of **Eddie's** apartment. It is a worker's flat, clean, sparse, homely. There is a rocker down front; a round dining table at center, with chairs; and a portable phonograph.

At back are a bedroom door and an opening to the kitchen; none of these interiors are seen.

At the right, forestage, a desk. This is **Mr Alfieri's** law office. There is also a telephone booth. This is not used until the last scenes, so it may be covered or left in view.

A stairway leads up to the apartment, and then farther up to the next story, which is not seen.

Ramps, representing the street, run upstage and off to right and left.

As the curtain rises, **Louis** and **Mike**, longshoremen, are pitching coins against the building at left.

A distant foghorn blows.

Enter **Alfieri**, a lawyer in his fifties turning gray; he is portly, goodhumored, and thoughtful. The two pitchers nod to him as he passes. He crosses the stage to his desk, removes his hat, runs his fingers through his hair, and grinning, speaks to the audience.





### Stage Directions

Recap on prior learning:

Stage directions are instructions in the script of a play that tell actors how to enter, where to stand, when to move, and so on. Stage directions can also include instructions about lighting, scenery, and sound effects, but their main purpose is to guide actors through their movements onstage.

Arthur Miller gives a very detailed description of how the stage should look.



What do these stage directions tell the audience?

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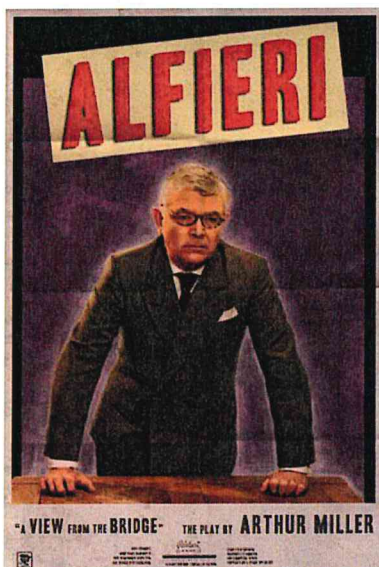
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### **Alfieri – the omniscient narrator**

Alfieri makes six appearances on stage throughout the play.

He is a portly, good-humoured, and thoughtful **lawyer** who was born in Italy. He also acts as the play's **narrator**, in imitation of ancient Greek tragedies where a group of actors commented on proceedings and were known as the '**chorus**'. In these plays, always plays a huge part, and no one can change its course.

As a lawyer, he works in the poor Italian community of Red Hook, Brooklyn, using his education and knowledge to help the people with their small legal issues.

At the start of the play he refers to three thousand years of distrust which have been felt by Sicilians towards lawyers, because a lawyer means the law. He thinks that living in America and following the written law makes people less and less likely to take the law into their own hands. He says, 'And now we are quite civilised, quite American'.

### **How is Alfieri presented in the opening section of the play?**

'The two pitchers nod to him as he passes'

'He crosses the stage to his desk, removes his hat, runs his fingers through his hair, and grinning, speaks to the audience.'

'You see how uneasily they nod to me? That's because I am a lawyer.'

...'that suspicious little nod of theirs lie three thousand years of distrust.'

'I am inclined to notice the ruins in things...'

'Justice is very important here.'

'This is the gullet of New York swallowing the tonnage of the world.'

...'as the parties tell me what the trouble is, the flat air in my office suddenly washes in with the green scent of the sea'



How is Alfieri presented in the opening pages of the play?

**Evaluative verbs**

(how does Miller do it?):

- Clearly
- Subtly
- Clearly
- Cleverly
- Dramatically
- Successfully
- Effectively
- Convincingly
- Carefully
- skilfully

**Help box:**

Alfieri is portrayed as \_\_\_\_\_

The phrase " \_\_\_\_\_ " suggests / implies that

\_\_\_\_\_

This is particularly effective because \_\_\_\_\_

Furthermore, the (key word / noun / adjective / dramatic irony / stage direction) highlights that Alfieri is \_\_\_\_\_

And connotes/ conveys the idea that/ emphasises

\_\_\_\_\_

Consequently, as a reader I feel \_\_\_\_\_ because

\_\_\_\_\_.

Miller has successfully/ cleverly/ interestingly presented Alfieri this way to illustrate \_\_\_\_\_

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Today we will read and focus on our first impressions of:

**Eddie**  
**Beatrice**  
**Catherine**

How are they presented?  
What is their family dynamic?



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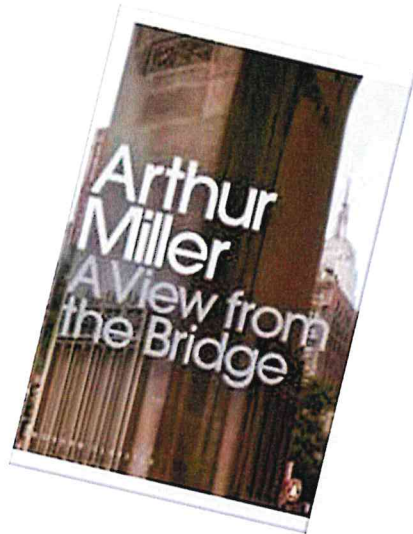
Eddie Carbone's surname is significant. It means 'carbon' which is one of the most common elements. This tells us that he is an 'everyman'; an ordinary man who represents all men. He was born in America but his father came from Italy – probably Sicily – around the turn of the century (1900). He understands that people must obey the written American law, but deep inside him he has the ancient Italian desires for respect and revenge.

Beatrice is Eddie's wife. Her name means 'blessed' (from the Italian word 'beata') and she does have a saint-like quality. She is long-suffering and patient, and we see plenty of examples of her goodness in the play. We can assume that she has had some sorrow in her life since she has no children of her own, and it is likely that she would have loved to be a mother. She has, in part, been able to realise this dream because she has brought up Catherine, her sister Nancy's daughter, since she was a baby.

Catherine is 17 years old, attractive and lively. She is at college studying to be a stenographer. At the start of the play she is bursting with excitement because she has been offered a job at a big plumbing company. She has not actually completed her course yet, but has been told that she is "the best student in the whole class" and that she will be able to accept the job and still take the end-of-year examination.



- Read from page 3 - 15
  - As we read, we are tracking our initial impressions and thoughts on Eddie, Beatrice and Catherine.



**What stood out? Why are these quotations important?**

Eddie is pleased and therefore shy about it' (when Catherine says hi)

'She sits on her heels beside him'

'you're a baby, you don't understand these things' E to C

'Beatrice, all I'm worried about is you got such a heart that I';; end up on the floor with you, and they'll be in our bed.' E to B

'You're an angel! God bless you!' B to E

'That ain't what I wanted, though'... 'but that ain't what I had in mind.' E on C's job offer

'she's no baby no more' B on C

'You're the Madonna type' E to C

**Aims of Week 3:**

**Introduction to dramatic irony and explore the story of Vinny.**

**Explore the characters and understand their function in the play. Read the play to page 23.**

**Watch the clip and write a review of the play so far.**



Key vocabulary to learn in Week 3 using a dictionary:

Foreshadowing

Dramatic Irony

Patriarchy

Naivety

**Pick three quotes which highlight the use of dramatic irony in this section.**

**Think about what themes they relate to and why they are effective.**

Catherine: The kid **snitched**?

Eddie: **On his own uncle!**

Catherine: What, **was he crazy?**

This highlights the theme of family values and loyalty.

Eddie is disgusted that someone could do that to their own family.

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**What are family dynamics? How are these family dynamics similar or different?**











**Aims of Week 5:**

**Acting on KP feedback and completing next steps.**

**Explore the themes in AVFTB. Read to the end of Act One.**

**Understanding how to answer a statement question.**

**Using show not tell to describe a character's emotions.**

**Key vocabulary to learn for this week using a dictionary:**

Dubiously

Elated

Mystified

**Which emotions can you see in the images?**



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