



RESOURCES FOR TEACHING English 14-16

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David A. Hill

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RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH: 14–16

David A. Hill

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As this book was going to press a new coalition government was making changes within education, so references to the TDA, QCDA and any other governmental website may no longer be completely up-to-date.

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Introduction

The object of *Resources for English 14–16* is to provide KS4 teachers of English with a wealth of ready-made lessons that will make lesson preparation easier. The book contains a set of 70 different lesson plans, each with a related photocopiable task sheet. These are thematically arranged across eight different topics, with between seven and 11 lesson plans/task sheets for each topic. The majority of the lesson plans are text-based, that is, there is a reading passage for them. Just over half of these texts are examples of poetry, mostly contemporary; the rest are various kinds of prose: short story, novel extracts, magazine articles and essays. The texts are worked into through a range of typically student-centred brainstorming activities, and then worked out of with activities on analysing form and language, and through writing and drama activities. Classics are also included, with work by Dickens, Blake, Wordsworth and Browning, and modern classics feature poetry by the likes of Carol Ann Duffy, Simon Armitage, Peter Porter, Brian Patten and U. A. Fanthorpe. The activities presented work rigorously around the criteria laid down in the National Curriculum Programme of Study for KS4, and these are referenced on the Continuum website for this book (<http://education.hill.continuumbooks.com>). Over the 70 lesson plans, there is complete coverage of all the criteria. However, this collection of lesson plans also has its eye on the future, and the intention to integrate English language and literature study, hence the text-based approach.

The lesson plans represent ‘a way’ of working; each teacher will adapt these plans to suit his or her needs, as there is no one recipe for every class; I hope, however, that what is presented here will provide a useful lesson base. I should add that, because of the space available, the notes on the texts are far from exhaustive; I have tended to go for the central features of the texts, relating to both content and structure. There is always more for you and the students to explore. Most of the texts are available online, and the relevant sites are referenced in each lesson plan; texts that are not available online are provided in the Resource Bank at the back of the collection. Additional useful websites are also listed on the Continuum website for this book, for example YouTube links where performances of poems can be watched and readings can be listened to. I hope, dear colleagues, that you have as much fun teaching these lessons as I did researching, writing and trialling them.

David A. Hill
Budapest
March, 2010

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Section 1 The World of School

Memories of junior school

Introduction: Through the Carol Ann Duffy poem 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class' students explore their own memories of primary school and the way that people remember their past in general.

Aims and outcomes

- To read and discuss how a writer makes a place come alive
- To explore and write about their own memories of a place

Resources required: The poem 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class' from Carol Ann Duffy (1990) *The Other Country*. London: Anvil Press Poetry. You can find it online at:



www.tusitala.org.uk/blog/blog.php?bid=303

Lesson starter (5 minutes): Ask the students to write down the name of the teacher they had in their final year at junior school. Ask them to briefly note some of the things they remember about lessons with that teacher, about the classroom, about their classmates, and any specific events they recall.

Main lesson (40 minutes)

- Put the students into groups of four to talk about their memories. Elicit what sort of things they remembered and note them on the board – categorize them as you list them under headings:
Teacher/Classroom/Pupils/Events/Lessons/Playground and any other categories that arise.
- If elements such as particular sounds, smells and tastes haven't arisen already, ask which ones come into mind when they think of that class or the school in general, and list them under Senses.
- Ask the students how they felt in their final year at junior school. If necessary, prompt with questions: were you sad that you were leaving? Was junior school a happy time for you?
- Give out copies of the poem (or show it on the interactive whiteboard) and ask them to read it individually.
- Ask them if there is anything they don't understand in the poem and gloss that. Two cultural points they may be unfamiliar with are:
 - a) Brady and Hindley and the so-called 'Moors Murders' in 1963–65, when Ian Brady and Myra Hindley sexually abused and killed five children.
 - b) 'A skittle of milk' refers to the one third pint of milk every child had at morning break 1946–70.
- Give them the task sheet and ask them to do Activity 1 (list the things they find in the poem in the appropriate column) individually, then compare with a partner. Call back answers from the whole class, and add them under the class's list on the board. Ask them to spot any similarities between what they remembered and what Duffy writes about. Also any major differences, and what the reasons may be for that.
- Ask the students which features of Duffy's poem they can relate to and why. (e.g. 'I can relate to *chalky pyramids rubbed to dust* because I was board monitor in the class a few times, and I remember rubbing out what the teacher had written.')
- Ask the students to do Activity 2 on the task sheet individually, then discuss their answers with a partner. Call back the answers from the whole class.
- Ask the students to work through Activity 3 individually and discuss their answers with a partner. Call back the answers from the whole class.

TASK SHEET: Memories of junior school



1. Read the poem 'In Mrs Tilscher's Class' and complete the table below with words and short phrases related to the topics in the headings.

Teacher	Pupils	Classroom	Lessons	Events	Playground	Senses
Mrs Tilscher	A dunce	Chalky				

2. Look at the second verse of the poem. What does this tell you about the writer's feelings about being in Mrs Tilscher's class? What images help give the impression, and what effect does being at school have on her?
3. Think about the figures of speech used in the poem.
 - a) What figure of speech is 'the classroom glowed like a sweet shop'?

 - b) What is the effect of it?

 - c) Find another example of the same figure of speech and write it below.

 - d) What is the effect of this one?

 - e) What figure of speech is the 'laugh of a bell'?

 - f) What is the effect of it?

 - g) Find another example of the same figure of speech and write it below.

 - h) What is the effect of it?

4. Reread the poem from 'A rough boy . . .' to the end. What is the relationship between what the boy, what the writer asked Mrs Tilscher and the general feeling behind the whole last verse? Write some sentences to explain this.
5. Is the poet successful at describing her feelings at that time? Why/why not?

- Ask the students to do Activity 4 individually, then exchange their writing with a partner for comparison and comment. Discuss their answers in a whole-class setting.
- Ask the students to discuss Activity 5 in pairs and tell another pair what they think.

Plenary (15 minutes)

- Round the lesson up with a discussion of individual feelings about the poem and its success.
- Discuss the poem as a ‘poem’ – its form (irregular verses, no rhyme or chime, irregular syllable patterning) and language use.

Homework: Ask the students to write a poem or a paragraph of prose about their memories of their final junior school teacher’s class.

Differentiation (of homework product): Students who don’t want to/can’t write about their final junior school class memories, might be offered a variety of alternatives:

- Memories of another junior school class
- Memories of somewhere they went, for example on holiday at a camp site: the tent, the people, the events, and so on.
- Memories of a place they used to go to regularly when they were younger, e.g. a sports or other club, cubs or brownies.

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Learning more than classroom subjects

Introduction: Through the comparison of two similarly-titled poems the students will explore the wider lessons of life they learn through other events that occur at school.

Aims and outcomes

- Discovering meaning through guided close reading and discussion in groups
- Dealing with the formal structure of a poem and the effect it creates
- Writing a personal response to a piece of literature

Resources required: The poems 'The Lesson' from David A. Hill (1986) *The Eagles and the Sun*. Niš: Prosveta (Resource Bank) and 'The Lesson' from Edward Lucie-Smith (1961) *A Tropical Childhood and Other Poems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. This second poem is available online at:



www.guardian.co.uk/books/2007/jul/27/poetry.featuresreviews

<http://thekumarexperience.wordpress.com/2009/02/21/poetry-the-lesson-by-edward-lucie-smith>

The Lucie-Smith poem has also been anthologized in: Donachy M (Ed.) (2007) *101 Poems about Childhood*. London: Faber.

Lesson starter (5 minutes): Ask the students to think about something specific they have learnt at school in a particular subject area recently. Call back some examples from the whole class.

Main lesson (50 minutes)

- Ask the students to do Activity 1 on the task sheet. Once they have thought of something, they can discuss their ideas in pairs. Then call back suggestions and list them on the board.
- Give half the class Poem A (Hill) and the other half Poem B (Lucie-Smith). Ask them to read their poem, think about the questions on the task sheet individually, then discuss it in groups of three or four with others who have read the same poem.
- Put the students together in pairs (or pairs of pairs) who have read a different poem. Ask them to complete Activity 3 on the task sheet. Give copies of the other poem to all students.
- Make a table as in task sheet Activity 3 on the board; call back suggestions from the whole class and write them up. Generate discussion about the answers you get.
- Activity 4: Ask all the students to look at Poem B (Lucie-Smith) and work out the formal structure of it ((a) 2 verses in (b) ABCBDADC rhyme-scheme, with (c) ten-foot lines).
- Activity 5: Ask the students to look at Poem A (Hill) and examine the punctuation (brackets/ single apostrophes for thoughts; speech marks for words said), and the effect of the words used in lines 11–14 (all single-syllable words, except for *silent* and *upon*, both of which are 'soft' sounds, reflecting the 'stillness' after the teacher's death; also the assonance (*all- awe*) and consonance (*still-all, we-were*) are all soft 'deadening' sounds adds to this effect).

Plenary (5 minutes): Engage the whole class in a discussion about which of the two poems they prefer and saying why.

Homework: Ask the students to complete Activity 6 on the task sheet for homework, using the ideas discussed in the Plenary discussion.

Differentiation: When the students discuss their own 'other learning', make room for a different range of experiences and where there may have been racial issues, bullying and different experiences between girls and boys. Try to ensure that a broad range of experiences are talked about and noted.

TASK SHEET: Learning more than classroom subjects



1. You learn many things at school. Perhaps you have recently learnt how to do differential calculus in maths, or about rubber production in Indonesia in geography. But you also learn other lessons related to areas such as relationships and social behaviour. Think of some things like these that you have learnt in the last year or two.
2. Read the poem you are given and think about these things:
 - a) Whose voice do you hear speaking?
 - b) What is the important event that happens?
 - c) How does the speaker feel about school?
 - d) What is the *lesson* that the speaker learns?

When your teacher tells you, discuss your ideas with others who have read the same poem as you.
3. Work with someone who has read the other poem. Tell each other about your poem, then make notes about the similarities and differences in the two poems.

	Poem A (Hill)	Poem B (Lucie-Smith)
Which places in the school does the action take place?		
What similar event triggers the poem?		
What emotions does the speaker have about what happens?		
What is the <i>lesson</i> that is learnt?		

4. Read Poem B (Lucie-Smith). It is organized very formally. What are the three key elements of its structure? Write them below:
 - a) Verse organization : _____
 - b) Rhyme scheme: _____
 - c) Line length: _____
5. Read Poem A (Hill). It has a blank verse form, but has some noticeable effects related to the punctuation, and the words used in lines 11–14. Examine these and discuss them with a partner.
6. Write a paragraph saying which of the two poems you prefer and why.

Tensions at secondary school

Introduction: This extract comes from *To Sir, With Love* by E. R. Braithwaite (New York: Jove, 1959) which tells the story of a black West Indian teacher – Rick Braithwaite – teaching in a rough working-class secondary school in London’s East End in the 1950s.

Main aims and outcomes

- To enhance cross-cultural understanding and critical thinking
- To offer two different writing activities, one involving personal opinion related to the content of the text, the other to transform a text into another narrator’s standpoint
- To give opportunity for drama work and the critical assessment of performance

Resources required: The appropriate section from Chapter 14 of the novel (Resource Bank).

Lesson starter (10 minutes): Ask the students what they know about immigration into the UK after World War II. Discuss what the situation was like for the first West Indians and Asians who moved to Britain (prejudice, difficulties in finding housing, only menial jobs available, etc.).

Main lesson (40 minutes)

- Explain that the students are going to read an extract from the novel *To Sir, With Love* about a West Indian engineer from British Guiana (now Guyana) who works as a teacher in a secondary school on London’s East End. Students there leave school at 14, and he starts a teaching system based on respect: boys call girls Miss + surname, girls call boys by their surnames. The scene takes place at breaktime, while Braithwaite is helping some of the boys to lace up a football, and Pamela Dare is the only girl present.
- Ask the students to do Activity 1 on the task sheet individually, then discuss their ideas in a group of four. Call back suggestions and note them on the board in three columns: students’, colleagues’ and wider school community reactions.
- Activity 2. Students read and answer individually, then discuss their ideas with a partner. Call back answers from the whole class.
- Ask the students who they think the protagonist is in this extract (Pamela Dare). Ask them to reread the extract and do Activity 3, noting down up to six words and phrases that are used to describe her. Call their answers back and note them on the board. Ask what the effect of this is (to portray her as a strong, forceful and dominant character, more mature than the boys)
- Activity 4. Students think about their answers in relation to the extract and their own opinions. Ask them to discuss their ideas in a group, then open it up as a whole class discussion.
- Activity 5. Students explore their feelings about what is said, and differences between the 1950s and now. Ask them to swap and discuss their writing. Start a class discussion.
- In Activity 6 the students act out the scene in sevens. With uneven classes, one student can be the narrator, while the others ‘walk through’ the actions and say their lines. Otherwise, you or a student could narrate while the groups act the scene out simultaneously.

Plenary (10 minutes): Have the groups perform their version for the others, and then have a class discussion on which was the most successful interpretation and why.

Homework: Ask what point of view the event is written from (the teacher’s). Ask the students to choose either Denham, Potter or Pamela Dare and to write the extract seen from that character’s point of view, with them as first-person narrator.

Differentiation: The whole activity is about racial differentiation (West Indian/white British), male/female student differentiation, role differentiation (teacher-student) and time differentiation (the 1950s to now) and the activities suggested explore these areas.

TASK SHEET: Tensions at secondary school



1. The story of *To Sir, With Love* (E. R. Braithwaite, 1959) is about how a young West Indian engineer gets a job teaching in a secondary school in the East End of London in the 1950s. What problems do you think he faced? Note down some ideas.

2. Read the extract and answer the following questions:
 - a) What happens to start the whole event in this scene?

 - b) How do you understand Potter's first comment? How else can it be understood? What did Potter intend?

 - c) What role does Pamela Dare take in relation to the teacher?

 - d) What makes her comments so successful with her classmates?

 - e) Why does she also attack Seales?

3. Look at the language that the author uses to describe Pamela Dare in this scene. Write down some of the phrases used below. What effect does this have?

4. Potter says 'I was only having a little joke and Sir didn't mind'. Do you think the teacher really didn't mind? Do you think it is an acceptable remark for a student to make to a teacher? How far do you think that what Seales says in his penultimate speech is true?

5. Do you think things happen and are said in this extract that might have been acceptable in Britain in the 1950s, but which would not be acceptable in your school now? Write a paragraph explaining your ideas.

6. Get together in a group of seven and take one of the roles each (Braithwaite, Denham, Fernman, Seales, Potter, Tich Jackson, Pamela Dare). You are going to act out the scene. Decide how you will stage it, and set up part of the classroom accordingly, then practise it through a couple of times.

Playing with the language of school

Introduction: The students will read an extract from *The Mock Turtle's Story* – a chapter from Lewis Carroll's classic children's novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. It is hoped that many students will be familiar with the book, either from reading it when younger or seeing a staged or film version.

Aims and outcomes

- To read and enjoy an amusing piece of English
- To understand the way that English plays with words (homophones, homographs)
- To enable students to create their own puns and use them successfully in their own production

Resources required: A copy of 'The Mock Turtle's Story', beginning at "When we were little," the Mock Turtle went on at last . . . down to "Tell her something about the games now." It is online at:



www.literature.org/authors/carroll-lewis/alices-adventures-in-wonderland

(click on Chapter 9 'The Mock Turtle's Story' and scroll down to the correct section.)

Lesson starter (5 minutes): Ask the students if they know who Lewis Carroll was – elicit titles of books, poems and any other information. You might reasonably expect *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Through the Looking-Glass*, and *What Alice Found There*, the long poem 'The Hunting of the Snark', and individual poems from the two *Alice* stories, such as 'Jabberwocky' and 'You Are Old Father William'.

Main lesson (45 minutes)

- Give out the task sheet and ask students to work in pairs to complete Activity 1. Elicit answers from around the class.
- Ask the students to do Activity 2 individually; decide if it needs to be a dictionary activity or not. Possible answers: *A pun is a joke that depends on playing with words, and which exploits the ambiguity between similar sounding words.* There are two ways in which puns work: through *homographs* – words which are spelt the same but have different meanings (e.g. *can* = to be able; *can* = metal container), and through *homophones* – words which sound the same but are written differently (e.g. *eight* – *ate*; *bear* – *bare*).
- Elicit examples of homophones and homographs that students have found.
- Ask students to do Activity 3 in pairs; elicit their answers in a whole-class setting. (a) works because *tune a* (meaning to make an instrument sound right) sounds like *tuna* (the fish), and the effect is added to by the homograph *bass* which is a type of fish and a type of instrument (although the pronunciation is different). (b) works because the verb *flies* and the noun *flies* are written and said in the same way. (c) works because the noun *pupils* means both students and part of the eye.
- Give out the extract from 'The Mock Turtle's Story' and ask students to do Activity 4. When they have finished, elicit their answers – you might want to write them on the board.
- Ask them to complete the table in Activity 5 based on the previous discussion. Answers:

TASK SHEET: Playing with the language of school



1. In the extract from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* which you are going to read, the Mock Turtle is telling Alice about his school days, aided by his friend the Gryphon. Tell a partner what other episodes you know from either of Lewis Carroll's two books, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*.
2. Look at the three words below. If necessary, use a dictionary to find out what they mean, and write a definition of each, and some examples of (b) and (c).
 - a) A pun is _____
 - b) A homophone is _____
 These are some examples: 1) _____ and _____ ; 2) _____
 and _____ ; 3) _____ and _____.
 - c) A homograph is _____
 Some examples are 1) _____ meaning _____ and also
 meaning _____ ; 2) _____ meaning _____ and also
 meaning _____ ; 3) _____ meaning _____ and also
 meaning _____.
3. Look at these puns:
 - a) You can tune a guitar, but you can't tuna fish. Unless, of course, you play bass. (Douglas Adams)
 - b) Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
 - c) Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who couldn't control his pupils?
 Talk about them with a partner and discuss what makes them work.
4. Read the extract from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. As you read, underline all the puns that you find, then compare with a partner.
5. Write the words that Lewis Carroll was punning on in the table below.

Mock Turtle's Word	Punning on . . .	Mock Turtle's Word	Punning on . . .
Tortoise	<i>taught us</i>	Seaography	
Reeling		Drawling	
Writhing		Stretc.hing	
Ambition		Fainting in Coils	
Distraction		an old crab	
Uglification		Laughing	
Derision		Grief	
Mystery		Lessons	

6. All of these puns use homophones, except one, which is a homograph. Which is the homograph?
7. Find two or three puns (or make some up) and tell your friends. Do they think they are funny? How do they work?

Mock Turtle's Word	Punning on . . .	Mock Turtle's Word	Punning on . . .
Tortoise	<i>Taught us</i>	Seaography	<i>Geography</i>
Reeling	<i>Reading</i>	Drawling	<i>Drawing</i>
Writhing	<i>Writing</i>	Stretc.hing	<i>Sketc.hing</i>
Ambition	<i>Addition</i>	Fainting in Coils	<i>Painting in oils</i>
Distraction	<i>Subtraction</i>	an old crab	<i>Crab = bad-tempered</i>
Uglification	<i>Multiplication</i>	Laughing	<i>Latin</i>
Derision	<i>Division</i>	Grief	<i>Greek</i>
Mystery	<i>History</i>	Lessons	<i>Lessons</i>

- Elicit the answer to Activity 6. *Crab* – meaning the sea creature and a bad-tempered person – we use the adjective *crabby* still in contemporary English, rather than say someone is *a crab*.
- Ask students to do Activity 7. They can then share the puns they think of in groups of four.

Plenary (10 minutes)

- Elicit some of the puns they have come up with from the whole class, and discuss how they work.

Homework: Ask students to find more examples of puns, say a minimum of two which work through homographs and two which work through homophones.

Differentiation

- You will need to make allowances for students who do not have *Alice* as an automatic piece of cultural baggage.
- You might do this by getting those who know to tell some of the story, or by showing extracts from one of the five film versions (Directors: Norman Z. Mcleod, 1933; Dallas Bower, 1950; Disney, 1951 (cartoon); William Sterling, 1972; Tim Burton, 2010).

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Passing exams

Introduction: Through the Brian Patten poem 'The Minister for Exams' students will explore their attitudes to exams and also the position of the exam setters.

Aims and outcomes

- To explore and discuss attitudes to and feelings about exams
- To read, enjoy and analyse a contemporary poem

Resources required: The poem 'The Minister for Exams' from Brian Patten (1996) *Armada*. London: Flamingo, or online at:



www.spikemagazine.com/pattenminister.php

or from:



www.poetryarchive.org/childrensarchive/singlepoem.do?poemId=5921

where there is also a recording of Brian Patten reading the poem.

Lesson starter (10 minutes): Start the lesson as if you are going to give the students a test. Have enough A4 paper for each student to have a piece, and say something like: 'Right class . . . take everything off your desks except for a pen. I'm coming round to give you a piece of paper. When you get it, put your name and class at the top and today's date. We're going to have a test.' Go through with the whole 'game' seriously and in full 'teacher testing mode' until they all have paper and are sitting facing front. Then say 'Now, no talking or copying. First question . . .' Then pause, and say: 'How did you feel about this? Write down some words, phrases, sentences about your feelings and emotions when you knew you were going to have a test.' Give them time to write, individually. Then ask them to confer in groups of four; elicit ideas from the whole class. You might note some of the things they say on the board.

Main lesson (40 minutes)

- Give out the task sheet and ask them to read and answer the questions in Activity 1 individually; then group them in fours to discuss their ideas. Call back answers from the whole class.
- Ask them to do Activity 2 individually. They should write their answers on the sheet of paper you gave them. It is important that they don't talk or discuss their ideas at this stage. Do it like a test. You can give them a time limit – 15 minutes, telling them the time each 3 minutes.
- Ask them to get into the same group of four to discuss their answers. You can ask them to decide who they think got the answers right. When they have finished, call back some answers from around the class and ask others to comment on them.
- Ask them to stay in their fours and do Activity 4. Discuss their ideas with the whole class.
- Give out/display the Brian Patten poem and ask them to read it carefully.
- Ask them to answer the questions in Activity 5 individually. Call back their answers in a whole-class setting. Answers: (a) menial jobs as a cleaner; (b) he thought the questions were *simple* because they asked him to use his imagination; (c) personal answers; (d) because the Minister for Exams had a shallow soul, and didn't understand a child's imaginative answers.
- Ask students to get into their fours again and discuss Activity 6. Elicit their ideas. There are, of course, no right or wrong answers, however, one assumes that the Minister for Exams would have expected concrete, literal and definite answers rather than imaginative and allusive ones.