

THEORY BOOKLET

NAME:.....

**YEAR 12
ADVANCED
ENGLISH**

**MODULE A: MRS DALLOWAY / THE
HOURS**

LESSON 1: INTRODUCING THE HOURS

1300 008 008

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1. WELCOME TO MODULE A STUDY

Welcome to Module A study at Matrix! This course is designed for students studying *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *The Hours* (2002) as part of their Advanced English studies.

□ Year 12 English at Matrix

There is no Topic Test for Year 12 English. In Lesson Nine you will complete a Mock Exam and this exam will be reviewed by your peers. This will give you a chance to hone your skills in the following ways:

- Writing under timed exam conditions;
- Considering the work of others in your cohort;
- Practice evaluating student writing in terms of set marking criteria;
- And identifying your own areas of strength and areas for improvement.

There is dedicated writing time in Lessons One to Eight. You are encouraged to bring along your own lined paper so you can submit some of your written work to gain qualitative feedback from your teacher and to assess your progress in understanding.

Advanced English requires you to dedicate time to reading and engaging with your texts on a regular basis. Most senior students find that the study requirements for English outstrip those required for other subjects. There are good reasons for this:

- First, it always takes time to read and re-read texts. Attempting to speed through this process is counter-productive to the aims of the subject which rewards students for deep and close engagement with the prescribed material.
- Second, even if you do streamline your reading and writing processes, writing quickly does not mean you finish the exam early in English. It means you have time to develop a more a complex and nuanced argument.

Because it is difficult to save time in your study for English, you need to be prepared to spend a reasonable amount of time each week between now and the HSC exams to hone your reading, creative, and analytical skills. Matrix is here to help! Consider the Matrix Method for English provided behind the front cover – this outlines the steps that you can follow to succeed in this subject!

□ Studying for Module A

Year 12 English Advanced has four parts: the Common Module, and Modules A, B, and C. Module A is called Textual Conversations, and is based on studying a pair of connected texts.

Because Module A requires students to compare and contrast two texts, it is important that you develop a thorough appreciation of each text. Reading your texts is important to doing well in all English studies, but Module A is demanding because of the need to digest two full texts.

If you have not read *Mrs Dalloway* in full, or watched *The Hours*, your understanding of each lesson will be handicapped. These classes assume that you have a basic understanding of the texts. They are not a substitute for your own reading. However, once you know your texts, these classes will help you make sense of what you have read and prepare you for your Module A assessments.

Remember that everyone studies differently and works at different rates. Make sure you plan appropriately for your own pace!

STUDY QUESTIONS

Have you watched *The Hours*? If not, use the space below to plan a time to watch the film.

Have you finished reading *Mrs Dalloway*? If not, use the space below to plan your completion of the novel.

2. INTRODUCING THE HOURS

The Hours, released in 2002, is the second feature film by director Stephen Daldry. It tells the story of three days in the lives of three women (played by Nicole Kidman, Julianne Moore, and Meryl Streep), who are intimately connected despite living in very different situations and at very different times in the twentieth century (1900 – 2000). Each woman's life is refracted through Virginia Woolf's novel *Mrs Dalloway*. In this way, the film is a turn-of-the-century reflection on the past 100 years. In using the past in this way, *The Hours* reflects its modernist heritage as much as its postmodern context.

The director, Stephen Daldry, alludes to the way that artists and writers create something new by drawing on the past in the following scene:

MEDIA VIEWING: 'He makes them his own' 15:26 – 16:19.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Have you read any books or watched any films based on real events? How have these texts "made things their own", like Richard has done with Clarissa's life in his novel?

The film is based on a novel written by Michael Cunningham. The film and the novel make extensive references and allusions to Woolf's work and biography. The title itself is taken from Woolf: before it was called *Mrs Dalloway*, Woolf's draft of the text was called 'The Hours', a phrase Woolf referred to in her diary. From this fact alone, we can appreciate that the connection between these two texts will be strong.

Writers and artists have always used stories and events from the past as the basis of their works, but Daldry's film has a special relationship to Woolf's novel. Our aim in Module A study is to appreciate the complex nature of this relationship.

□ Stephen Daldry as an Artist

Module A requires students to appreciate the values, context and individual style of the authors whose works they are studying. While you may not have seen another work by Daldry, you can develop your appreciation for his style through research.

Read the following encyclopedia entry on Daldry and answer the questions below.

Pallardy, R. 21 September 2018. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Stephen Daldry (English Film and Theatre Director) - Extract

Stephen Daldry, in full Stephen David Daldry, (born May 2, 1961, Dorset, England), English film and theatre director known for his sensitive and nuanced treatments of stories featuring conflicted characters.

Daldry's father—a bank manager who died when Daldry was 15—discouraged his early interest in theatre. Abetted by his cabaret singer mother, however, Daldry joined a theatre troupe in Taunton and by age 15 had resolved to direct. He attended the University of Sheffield on a Royal Air Force scholarship, earning a bachelor's degree (1982) in English literature. At Sheffield he directed the university theatre company and cultivated his radical bona fides with forays into socialism and a penchant for wearing pillbox hats.

Daldry then further flouted convention as an apprentice clown in Italy. Upon returning to England, he settled in Sheffield, where he became the artistic director of the Metro Theatre Company (1984–86) and apprenticed at the Crucible Theatre (1986–88). While presiding over London's Gate Theatre (1989–92), he championed obscure works by international writers, an ethos equally apparent during his subsequent tenure as artistic director of the Royal Court Theatre (1992–98). Daldry's direction of J.B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* for the National Theatre in 1992 earned him a Laurence Olivier Award and, when the production traveled to Broadway (1994), a Tony Award. He returned to Broadway in 1999 as the director of British playwright David Hare's one-man show *Via Dolorosa*.

Daldry—at the time credited with one short film—was then unexpectedly tapped to direct *Billy Elliot*. The film—about a boy who finds refuge in ballet—was nominated for several Academy Awards, including best director. Daldry then helmed *The Hours* (2002), Hare's adaptation of Michael Cunningham's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. A series of three meditations on Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, the film starred Julianne Moore, Meryl Streep, and—as Woolf—Nicole Kidman. Daldry again received an Oscar nomination for best director, and Kidman claimed best actress honours.

In 2005 Daldry premiered *Billy Elliot, the Musical*, a stage adaptation of his earlier film, in London. The production, which featured music by Elton John, won four Olivier Awards. The Broadway production (2008) garnered 10 Tony Awards, including best musical and best director honours for Daldry. He returned to the big screen with *The Reader* (2008), which was adapted by Hare from German author Bernhard Schlink's novel. The film peers at the spectre of the Holocaust in post-World War II Germany through the lens of an affair between an illiterate woman (played by Kate Winslet) and a teenage boy who, as an adult, agonizes over the revelation that his lover was previously a concentration camp guard. The film earned Academy Award nominations for best picture and for Daldry's direction as well as an Oscar for Winslet. In his next film, *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* (2011), based on a novel by American writer Jonathan Safran Foer, a precocious nine-year-old boy wanders around New York City in search of the lock to a key left behind by his father, who died in the September 11 attacks.

In 2013 Daldry directed Helen Mirren in Peter Morgan's play *The Audience*, which imagined the private weekly conversations between Queen Elizabeth II and the succession of British prime ministers over six decades. He then oversaw a 2014 revival of David Hare's *Skylight*. The critically acclaimed production, which starred Carey Mulligan and Bill Nighy as former lovers, earned Daldry a Tony nomination for best director. Daldry returned to cinema with *Trash* (2014), a drama about three boys who stumble upon a political scandal while picking through refuse in the favela they call home. He then reteamed with Morgan on *The Crown* (2016–), a Netflix TV series about the life of Elizabeth II; Daldry served as executive producer and directed several episodes. In 2018 he won an Emmy Award for his direction.

In 2017 Daldry codirected *The Jungle*, a stage play set in the migrant encampment in Calais, France, just before it was razed in 2016. Written by two Englishmen who travelled to the camp and set up a theatre, the play not only explored the predicament of the refugees but also the guilt and helplessness of the camp's volunteers. Daldry then directed *The Inheritance*, which premiered in London in 2018. Inspired by E.M. Forster's classic novel *Howards End* (1910), the play considers the lives of young gay men a generation after the height of the AIDS crisis.

Daldry was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2004.

PAIR DISCUSSION

Identify three features that are shared across Daldry’s life and body of work so far. What type of stories does Stephen Daldry tend to tell? Note your findings below.

Consider the difference between theatre and film. How do you think Daldry’s experience in theatre would help him create “conflicted characters” in film and television?

3. CINEMATIC LANGUAGE

For the rest of this lesson, we will focus on developing our appreciation of the cinematic language of *The Hours*. Consider the following introduction to film studies, which gives a definition of the term.

Barsam, R. and Monahan, D. 2015. Looking at Movies - Extract

Cinematic language is the name given by the authors to the conventions of filmmaking that have evolved over time to become something like an overall film grammar. As we do with spoken language, we often take the conventions and structures of cinematic language for granted, allowing our brains to passively experience them without much, or any, conscious interpretation. The result is a sort of invisibility of the techniques and strategies employed by the filmmakers. For viewers seeking a few hours' entertainment, this invisibility is not a problem—in fact, it's probably what makes a movie entertaining, and one reason that movies have become the dominant art form of our time. But if we hope to understand movies better, we need to be alert to the components of cinematic language that most viewers experience without a second thought.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Brainstorm some of the film techniques you know. Have you ever noticed these techniques when you have been watching a film, a television show, or other video media?

Can you think of any directors or films that have a unique 'cinematic language', i.e. a unique style? Brainstorm and discuss your findings.

Consider the following statement by the authors: “As we do with spoken language, we often take the conventions and structures of cinematic language for granted, allowing our brains to passively experience them without much, or any, conscious interpretation.” How does this comparison help us understand the “invisibility” of film techniques?

□ Key Technique: The Match Cut

The first technique we will consider is the **MATCH CUT**. You should be familiar with the concept of a **CUT** from previous studies. A cut is an abrupt transition from one shot to another, and is usually contrasted with other kinds of transitions, like the **DISSOLVE** and the **WIPE**. A match cut creates continuity between shots by ‘matching’ something in one shot to something the shot that follows it.

MEDIA VIEWING: SFX Secrets: The Graphic Match Cut

PAIR DISCUSSION

1. The video is a montage of **GRAPHIC MATCH CUTS** from many different sources. Which stood out to you? Discuss their meaning with a classmate.

2. What does the word 'graphic' refer to in the phrase 'graphic match cut'?

3. The narrator notes that "Anything can be matched across a cut." As a class, brainstorm elements other than visual similarity that could be matched across a cut.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. The narrator discusses three types of **GRAPHIC MATCH CUTS** and their effects. List these three types in the space below.

2. Based on the video and the class discussion, write your own definition of the **MATCH CUT** in the space below.

Match Cuts in *The Hours*

Daldry’s film lives and dies on the idea that the three main characters, who we follow on a different day of their lives in different years, are intimately connected in many ways. One technique that Daldry uses to achieve these connections is the **MATCH CUT**.

Consider the following clip from *The Hours*. This montage serves as our introduction to the main characters and introduces the three timelines and locations of the film. This montage also serves as the opening credits sequence of the film.

MEDIA VIEWING: Virginia, Laura, and Clarissa montage: 3:33 to 8:44

CLASS DISCUSSION

The biography we read earlier notes that Daldry is “known for his sensitive and nuanced treatments of stories featuring conflicted characters.” Based on this montage, what emotions and experiences do Virginia, Laura, and Clarissa have in common?

Review the clip and make a note of any cuts that link one shot to another. These will all be examples of **MATCH CUTS**. Where do we find **GRAPHIC MATCH CUTS**? What else is used to match one shot to another?

FOCUS QUESTION

Consider one theme or emotion introduced in the opening credits montage. Explain how Daldry uses **MATCH CUTS**, and any other relevant film techniques, to create connections between the experiences of Virginia, Laura, and Clarissa.

Daldry also uses match cuts to link the beginning of Virginia, Laura and Clarissa’s day to the first sentence of Woolf’s novel. Consider the clip below.

MEDIA VIEWING: “Leonard, I believe I have a first sentence.”: 8:30 to 11:08

PAIR DISCUSSION

What themes or ideas does the sentence “I will buy the flowers myself” suggest? Consider how this relates to the flowers introduced in the opening montage. Note your ideas below.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Each character in Daldry’s film has a different relationship to the central character of Woolf’s novel, Clarissa Dalloway. What could the idea of ‘buying the flowers herself’ mean for each of these characters?

Virginia Woolf

Laura Brown

Clarissa Vaughan

□ Key Technique: Parallel Editing

Another important technique Daldry uses to create meaning in *The Hours* is **PARALLEL EDITING**. This is a key technique in the development of cinematic language.

PARALLEL EDITING	<p>An editing technique for developing story actions taking place in separate locations within the same time frame, or for related actions occurring at different times.</p> <p>Synonyms: cross-cutting, intercutting, parallel cutting, parallel montage.</p>
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This technique is now accepted as a natural feature of film and video storytelling. **PARALLEL EDITING** creates the impression of simultaneous action, and we assume that what we are seeing are images of two distinct places or times.

Consider the following clip, which uses our assumptions about parallel editing to create humour.

MEDIA VIEWING: Naked Gun 2 ½ - Gun Fight

FOCUS QUESTION

Explain how the editing creates humour by filling in the blanks in the passage below.

In this clip, parallel editing is used to create the impression that the men are _____

_____ . However, when the clip

cuts to a _____ shot, we discover that _____

_____ .

□ **Parallel Editing in The Hours**

PARALLEL EDITING creates a powerful sense of connection between events that are happening in different places and times. Daldry exploits this technique to create links between his characters. Consider the following example:

MEDIA VIEWING: Laura Brown and Ritchie: 56:55 to 1:02:06

CLASS DISCUSSION

PARALLEL EDITING may create the impression of actions occurring simultaneously in separate places, or the impression of related actions occurring at different times. Which impression does this clip create?

FOCUS QUESTION

Consider how the imagery of Richie playing with his blocks is **CROSS-CUT** with Laura’s decision to go to the hotel. Analyse how **PARALLEL EDITING** is used to give significance to Laura’s actions.



**KEEP
CALM
AND
STUDY
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