



CLASSROOM PACK

- 1. Vocabulary exercises
- 2. Multiple choice
- 3. Written expression
- 4. Oral expression
- 5. Culture

VOCABULARY EXERCISES



PART A: Complete the sentences with the missing words from the play

ACROSS

3. The latest fashion _____ was found wearing Crocs!

5. I was with Lisa all night. She's my _____.

6. Good evening Madam. I am _____ Renolds and we received a call to this address about a possible crime in progress.

9. We got the _____ reports back from the lab. His DNA was found all over the murder weapon.

10. I can't eat that I'm _____.

DOWN

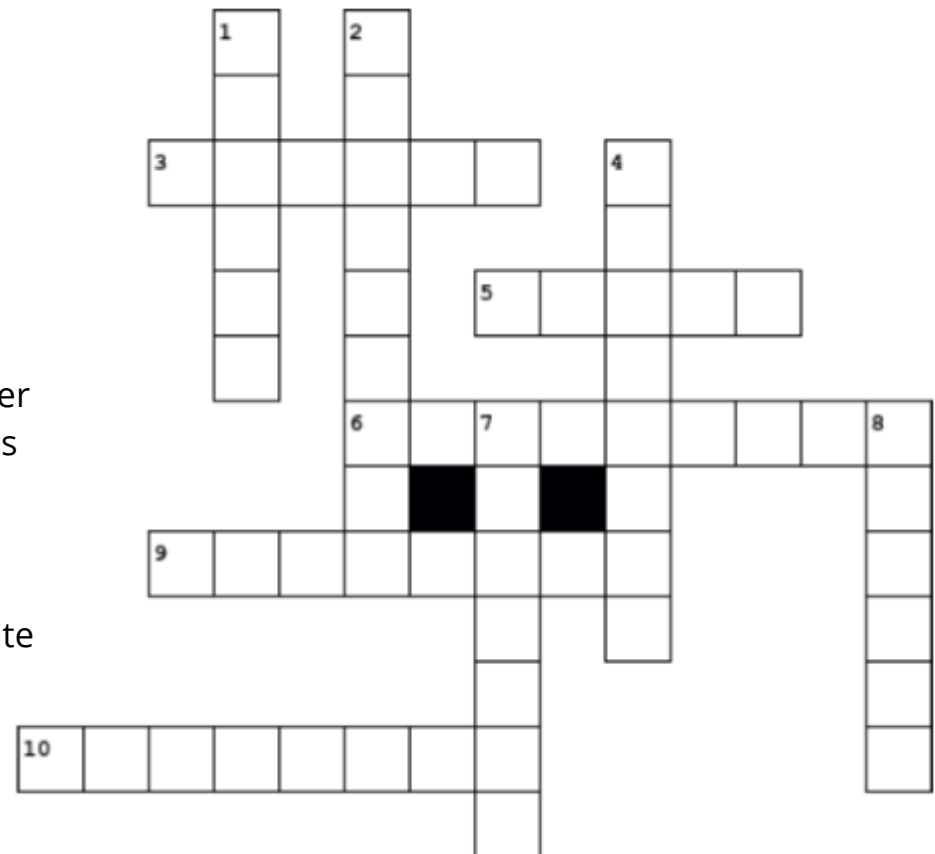
1. The house is infested with rats so I put some _____ out for them.

2. We should get a _____ to investigate what happened.

4. All the clues point in her direction. All the _____ is stacked against her.

7. We'll have to bring in the _____ and interrogate him.

8. You're a new cop, alright! You're a _____.



PART B - Code cracker: A good detective can find order in chaos. Unscramble the words to crack the code.

1	9		11	12			
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E A R T H S E R F - birds grow them

		6		13		
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M U S T O C E - an actor wears it on stage

4						8
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R E S T Y M Y - something unknown

	3	10			18	
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T E N I S C L - a customer for a service

2				19	7	14	
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W A D R O B Y A - a big theatre district in New York

	15			16			17
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K I C C R A N G - when you break something open

20			5	
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F R O P O - evidence that proves your point

3 10 1 9'6 2 13 11 14 7 14 3 16 10 18 17

6 12 14 19 5 7, 14 20 5 5 15 20 3 14 8 9 15,

11 12 14 11 6 11 15 13 11 6 14 18 19 1 15 9 11 6

12 10 6 12 5 13 15 13 20 5 18 11 12 9 6 11 14 17 9

14 18 19 11 12 9 18 10 6 12 9 14 15 19 18 5 4 5 15 9.

MULTIPLE CHOICES EXERCICES



You have read the summary of the play and characters; let's see what vital details you can remember...

1. Who falls dead on stage?

- ☐ Ciara Stone
- ☐ Paul Edison
- ☐ Mike O'Neil
- ☐ Madison Reese

2. What is the name of the director of the show?

- ☐ Madison Reese
- ☐ Paul Edison
- ☐ Brian Kane
- ☐ Lorcan

3. Where does the death and play take place?

- ☐ Unity Theatre
- ☐ Trinity Theatre
- ☐ Dublin
- ☐ Broadway

4. Who is having an affair with Madison Reese?

- ☐ Brian Kane
- ☐ Mike O'Neill
- ☐ Chief Batista
- ☐ Paul Edison

5. Ciara is jealous of Madison for multiple reasons. Which reason below is NOT one of those reasons

- ☐ She had an affair with her boyfriend
- ☐ She's a very talented actress
- ☐ She is playing the lead role
- ☐ Madison got a job that was promised to Ciara

6. Who is the stage manager?

- ☐ Paul Edison
- ☐ Ciara Stone
- ☐ Lorcan
- ☐ The Assistant

7. How would you describe Mike O'Neil?

- ☐ Thorough and detailed oriented
- ☐ Bubbly and a team player
- ☐ Clumsy and persistent
- ☐ Loud, angry and aggressive

8. How does the lead actress die?

- ☐ Stabbed
- ☐ Poisoned
- ☐ Heart attack
- ☐ Stage fright

9. What is Ciara Stone allergic to?

- ☐ Bees
- ☐ Cats
- ☐ Feathers
- ☐ Pollen

10. Who wrote Opening Night?

- ☐ Loïc Petit
- ☐ Xavier Hock
- ☐ Paul Edison



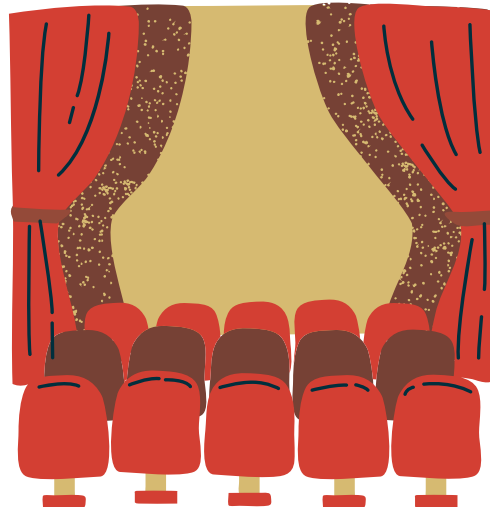
WRITTEN EXPRESSION

EXTRA! EXTRA! Read all about it! Miss Madison Reese has been MURDERED!

It's the opening night of the latest Paul Edison production at the Unity Theatre in Dublin, starring none other than Miss Madison Reese herself. You are a reporter in the audience going to write the latest review in the Irish Independent when Miss Reese collapses on stage, dead, during the performance. You manage to interview some of the cast, crew and the director for statements and now you must write an article on the latest tragedy at the Trinity Theatre.

Using what you know already about the play and the characters, write a news article the morning after the death of Miss Madison. It should be punchy and captivating and stick to "the facts" - you have a creative licence to make these up.

Remember to include detailed descriptions of **who, what, when, where** and **why**.



ORAL EXPRESSION

GAME: Murder, Murder!

You are arriving at a party where you do not know the host or anyone else. You received a random invitation...

Create a back story: Who are you? Where do you come from? Why would you come to a random party like this? A dark secret from your past? Remember the more details you add, the juicier your character is!

Begin by walking around the room shaking hands with one another and introducing yourself. As the “murderer” walks around shaking hands, they will quietly select a “victim.” When they shake hands, the “murderer” will lightly tickle the “victim’s” hand with their finger. The “victim” then waits seconds so the “murderer” can move away, and ACTS out a dramatic death.

The party (class) then stands in a circle, discussing who they believe is the “murderer.” The class can pick 3 suspects, and they must offer a reason for their accusation. The accused may DEFEND themselves. **Once everyone has spoken**, the class votes on who they believe is the “murderer.” The one with the most votes is out.

The game continues until either the murderer is discovered or is the only one left...



CULTURE



Popular culture has an obsession with murder mysteries, but this is not a recent phenomenon, though it seems to have blossomed again over the last decade. According to the University of Law, *“True crime gives an insight into our culture and norms as well as our anxieties and values. Researcher and author Coltan Scrivner states the popularity of true crime, the success of horror films and the quantity of violence in the news suggests that “morbid curiosity is a common psychological trait”.* It feeds our natural desire to solve puzzles and mysteries.”

In Opening Night we see a murder take place on stage and are invited to solve the crime along with Inspector Mike O’Neil. Murder mysteries are rampant through both fiction and non-fiction literature - from podcasts, novels and films to games and graphic novels.

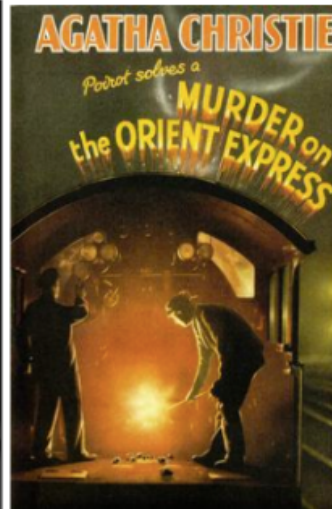
Read the synopsis for the different texts, plays, novels and films and be prepared to answer some questions.

Dame Agatha Christie is best known as the Queen of Crime. She is the best selling author of all time (selling over 2 billion copies), writing a mere 66 detective novels and 14 short story collections. Christie's work has been translated into 100 different languages and are still selling today. Christie was born in 1890 and began writing at 18, writing her first short story which was later rewritten as *The House of Dreams*. During the first world war, she created one of her most renowned and lasting characters, the Belgian detective, Hercule Poirot. Poirot features in 47 of Christie's novels and short stories and is best known for *Murder on the Orient Express*, which has been adapted to film, television series, games, radio and stage. Check out the trailer below! Her best known play *The Mousetrap*, is the longest running play ever and is still playing on the West End, London.

Check out the trailer and characters of The Mousetrap on the link below.



Vidéo - Murder on the Orient Express
About - Mousetrap

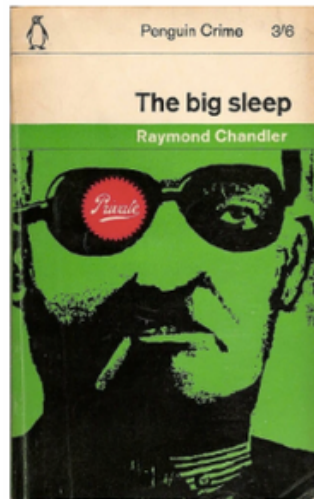


The Big Sleep, (1939) a detective novel by Raymond Chandler is one of the most influential books of all time (according to BBC News), the Guardian ranked it as number 62 as the best book of all time and Time's best 100 also placed it amongst its list. It has been adapted for the screen and, again, described as one of the best detective noir films of all time.

The novel follows Detective Philip Marlowe, a cynical private detective as he takes care of a blackmailing case, that gives way to other plot points, murders, attempted murders and mysteries. However dated with some racism and homophobia, the novel still holds up over 80 years later.

Like Christie's Poirot, Marlowe features in 7 of Chandler's novels. The novel itself has been described as "A relatively slight book, an incredible sense of intrigue throughout as our mysterious narrator Marlowe works in seedy LA, investigating the disappearance of a wealthy Socialite's husband and a series of seemingly unconnected murders."

[Vidéo - The Big Sleep Official Trailer](#)



My Favorite Murder Podcast is the original hit true crime comedy podcast hosted by Karen Kilgariff and Georgia Hardstark. Since its inception in January 2016, the show has broken global download records and sparked an enthusiastic and dedicated community of listeners, aka Murderinos.

It's a weekly podcast where each comedian, Kilgariff and Hardstark, select a murder, historical event, true crime or survivor story of their choice which they have researched and they discuss among themselves the details in (sometimes) comedic detail.

The podcast has over 385 episodes and debuted at #25 on the iTunes Top Comedy Podcasts and as of October 2016 reached #1. In 2019, Forbes named them the second highest ranking podcast ever! So, it would seem... murder does pay?

[The Podcast - My Favorite Murder](#)



The Knives Out series directed by Rian Johnson, starring Daniel Craig as Benoit Blanc our renowned detective, plays on the classic murder mystery expectations.

Rotten Tomatoes critics say ‘Knives Out sharpens old murder-mystery tropes with a keenly assembled suspense outing that makes brilliant use of writer-director Rian Johnson's stellar ensemble.’ giving it a whopping 97% rating.

The powerhouse cast brings a curious storyline to life. ‘The circumstances surrounding the death of crime novelist Harlan Thrombey are mysterious, but there's one thing that renowned Detective Benoit Blanc knows for sure -- everyone in the wildly dysfunctional Thrombey family is a suspect. Now, Blanc must sift through a web of lies and red herrings to uncover the truth.’



[Vidéo - Knives Out - Trailer](#)
[More reviews](#)



SUPERSTITIONS IN THE THEATRE

Theatrical folk are known for their superstitions and their mysteries... some for good reason and others more abstract. Lorcan, the stage manager in Opening Night, is particularly superstitious. Here are a few of the most well-known ones according to Broadway Direct:

[Read here the article](#)



A bad dress rehearsal means the show will be a hit.

This is an old wives' tale and no one is quite sure how it started (perhaps it was the quiet prayer of a high school drama teacher?). Many theater folks cling to the idea that a bad dress rehearsal is a good omen for a successful opening night. Occasionally, there is the coincidence that a disastrous final rehearsal precedes an amazing premiere, but this most likely is the result of a prepared production, committed artists, and a large-dose of adrenaline, not a deus ex machina.

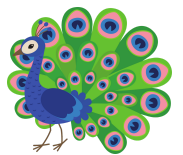
Turn on the ghost light before leaving the theatre.



When you enter a darkened theatre, there are many potential pitfalls, such as open trap doors and orchestra pits to fall into, scenery to walk into, props and furniture to fall over. The ghost light remains turned on in the center of the stage when all other lights have been turned out. It's merely a matter of practical safety. Or is it? The lore of almost every theatre usually involves a few theatre ghosts who haunt the place. Many thespians believe the ghost light wards off these spirits, while others believe they are there to give the spectral divas a lighted area to perform in. Whether it is for safety or for actual ghosts, I think we are all grateful its glow keeps us from having accidents and turning into freshly minted theatre ghosts ourselves.

Never bring a peacock feather on stage.

Peacock feathers may be beautiful, but an actor is never supposed to carry one on stage. The superstition is inspired by the pattern on the feather that, to many, looks like the evil eye. No theater production wants to risk offending an audience with this malevolent curse, which is supposed to bring misfortune or injury to anyone who casts it.



Whistling backstage in a theatre is considered a jinx.

This superstition grows out of a practicality: In the good old days of theater, scenery was manually lifted into the air by men hoisting it with ropes (there were no hydraulics or advanced rigging systems to make it safer and easier). The stagehands would cue each other by whistling. An actor who whistled backstage might accidentally cue a stagehand to lift or drop scenery, potentially putting an unaware performer at risk of being crushed by a wall or a sandbag. The best way to make sure you didn't become a theatre ghost was to refrain from whistling altogether. The rule has stuck and become a superstition.



Say “break a leg” instead of “good luck.”

A person is never supposed to wish an actor “good luck,” but instead they are supposed to say “Break a leg!” Though it may seem maudlin to do so, many theater folk believe there are mischief-making spirits of the stage who use their magic to force the opposite of what you wish to happen. Another theory comes from the idea that the word leg does not refer to an actor's leg, but to the theatrical curtains that mask the backstage that are known as “legs.” “Breaking a leg” means you've crossed from the backstage into the playing area, the ultimate goal of an actor: entering the spotlight.

Never say Macbeth in a theatre.

If you are an actor, you may have learned this one the hard way. It is considered bad luck to say the name of Shakespeare's “Scottish play” inside of a theatre. If you make this egregious mistake, there is no doubt that your fellow actors will become disgruntled and begin suggesting a series of counter curses you must follow to undo the damage. Reciting any line from the lucky play *Two Gentlemen of Verona* is one way out of the mess you have created. Some will tell you to recite this line from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: “If we shadows have offended, think but this and all is mended, that you have but slumbered here, whilst these visions did appear.” For the more athletically inclined, one should exit the theatre, spin around in a circle three times, and spit. Why is saying Macbeth a theatrical no-no? Well, some of the play draws on witchcraft incantations that supposedly call upon evil spirits. Still, other superstitions suggest that the original actor who played Macbeth died tragically during the performance and the show has been cursed ever since.

