



# “A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE” BY ARTHUR MILLER STUDY PACK

This study pack is designed to help you prepare for the critical essay element of the Critical Reading paper.

## ABSTRACT

This study pack contains summaries of the text, key quotations and the essay plans that we created in class.

Ms Kirkwood

National 5 English: Critical Reading Paper

## Contents Page

Character Summary.....	2-5
Plot Summary.....	6-8
Dramatic Effect Summary.....	9-10
Key Quotations.....	11
Turning Point Essay Plan.....	12-13
Dramatic Scene Essay Plan.....	14-15
Conflict Essay Plan.....	16-17
Loyalty Essay Plan.....	18-19

## CHARACTER SUMMARIES

When the play begins, we see the Carbone family - part of a poor Italian community in Brooklyn - excited about the imminent arrival of Beatrice's cousins from Italy. Yet the arrival of Marco and Rodolfo fires up tensions that have been smouldering under the surface of the family for a while, and the result is tragic.

### Eddie Carbone

- Eddie is 40 years old, an American of Sicilian decent. He is described as *"a husky, slightly overweight longshoreman."*
- He is an ordinary man, part of the local Italian community.
- He is **master of the house** - both Beatrice and Catherine are obviously used to him laying down the rules. He sees this as a 'manly' thing to do and he expects all men to do the same - which is why he cannot accept Rodolfo's more gentle talents.
- He is generous enough to offer a home to Beatrice's cousins, but at the same time slightly wary and **self-protective** or **selfish** - he reminds Beatrice not to let them sleep in his bed. (Perhaps this prepares us for the way he deals with his love for Catherine: is he selfish then too?)
- He **doesn't trust people** easily. He tells Catherine, *"the less you trust, the less you be sorry."* (This prepares us for his suspicion of Rodolfo.)
- He is concerned about his **honour** and protecting his good name. He ends the tale of the informer Vinny Bolzano, *"a guy do a thing like that? How's he gonna show his face?"*
- He is very **protective** of Catherine, whom he has brought up as if she were his own daughter. He paid for her typing lessons and had ambitions for her to rise to a different class. He is proud of her looks, yet concerned that she will attract the attention of men and is concerned about her new job. He finds it hard to admit that she has become a woman. *"I guess I just never figured... that you would ever grow up."*
- However, it soon becomes apparent that Eddie is **in love with Catherine**. He has not made love to his wife for three months. He quickly becomes **jealous** of Rodolfo because of the immediate impression Rodolfo makes on Catherine. The *stage directions* tell us, *"He looks at [Catherine] like a lost boy"* when she tells him she loves Rodolfo. He is unable to admit this shameful emotion to himself and is angry when Beatrice and Alfieri dare to mention it.
- As his feelings for Catherine become more **obsessive**, he does everything he can to prevent Rodolfo from marrying her. He tries to undermine Rodolfo. For example:
  - He mocks Rodolfo's skills at cooking, singing and sewing, claims he is homosexual and tells Catherine that he only wants her to gain US citizenship.
  - He tries to get the law involved and is amazed when Alfieri says that nothing can be done.
  - He tries violence: he 'teaches' Rodolfo to box as an excuse to hit him, then fights with Rodolfo when he knows Rodolfo has slept with Catherine.
  - He calls the Immigration Bureau is a last desperate attempt to stop the wedding: he cares so much for Catherine that he is prepared to break his code of honour.
- In the end, he **loses everything**: Catherine, his wife, his name. He has no option but to fight Marco to the death (he has the knife). Ironically, his death restores some of his lost honour because he does not try to escape his fate.
- The **conflict** that ends his life recalls other conflict we have seen:
  - **Verbal conflict** with all the other characters at some point or another. Even his jokes are barbed and bitter.

- **Physical conflict** with Rodolfo.
- **Conflict within himself** as he grapples with his love of Catherine

### Beatrice Carbone

- She is Eddie's wife. She has never had children of her own and cares for Catherine as if she were her own daughter.
- She is a **loving, caring** person. She is excited by the imminent arrival of her cousins and worried that everything is not just so for them, yet also *"nervous"*.
- She **defers to Eddie** and lets him control things in the home. Before the arrival of her cousins, she is anxious not to upset him: *"I'm just worried about you."*
- There are hints right from the start that she is **aware of Eddie's feelings** for Catherine, such as when she avoids Eddie's gaze when Catherine fetches his cigar. This becomes more obvious when she confronts Eddie about the state of their marriage: *"When am I gonna be a wife again, Eddie?"*
- Partly because of this, she **supports Catherine** and **encourages her** to be independent. She helps Catherine persuade Eddie to let Catherine go out to work and, later, tells Catherine she must stand up for herself. *"It means you gotta be your own self more."*
- She has a no-nonsense, practical approach, makes clear observations and is assertive. At the end, she is brave enough to tell Eddie the truth: *"You want somethin' else, Eddie, and you can never have her!"*
- She is upset by the conflict within the family that the relationship between Rodolfo and Catherine causes. She continually tries to be the calming influence. At the end, however, she remains loyal to Eddie, choosing to stay with him rather than attend Catherine's wedding. She is rewarded for this with Eddie's dying words - *"My B!"*

### Catherine

- She is 17 years old, the orphaned daughter of Beatrice's sister Nancy.
- She is **attractive, energetic** and **cheerful**. Yet she is also **naïve** - she has never known anything of life outside the Carbone household.
- She **loves Eddie like a father**.
- She wants his approval for everything that she does: right at the start, she is desperate for him to admire her new skirt.
- Later we hear that perhaps she is too familiar with Eddie now she has grown up: Beatrice tells her not to wander round the apartment in her slip, which shocks and saddens Catherine - the stage directions say, *"She is at the edge of tears, as though a familiar world had shattered."* She had never before imagined there was anything wrong with her relationship with Eddie.
- She is excited at Marco and Rodolfo's arrival - they represent the world outside her own sheltered life. She is attracted to Rodolfo straight away - so she is reluctant to take off her high heels when Eddie tells her to!
- She is initially **tormented** because her love of Rodolfo is at odds with her love for Eddie.
- She tries to encourage Eddie to talk to Rodolfo: *"Why don't you talk to him, Eddie? He blesses you, and you don't talk to him hardly."*
- She is loyal to Eddie and tells Beatrice that her marriage to Rodolfo would be wrong if Eddie is against it.
- However, she is **prepared to take sides**: when Eddie spars with Rodolfo at the end of Act 1, she rushes to help her lover. (This prepares us for her choosing to marry Rodolfo in spite of Eddie's wishes in Act 2.)

- By the start of Act II, she has become quieter and more withdrawn, concerned about the rift between the two men she loves. She mourns to Rodolfo, *"I mean I know him and now I'm supposed to turn around and make a stranger out of him?"*
- However, she is **strong** enough to leave Eddie to get married, and is furious with him both for betraying the brothers and for forbidding Beatrice to attend her wedding ceremony, calling him *"This rat!"*
- During the play, she turns from a child into a woman, capable of making her own decisions. Despite her new **independence** and **maturity**, she blames herself on Eddie's death: *"Eddie, I never meant to do nothing bad to you."* Do you think she is partly responsible for the *tragedy*?

### Marco

- Marco is the older brother of Rodolfo. He comes from a poor village in Sicily. He is Beatrice's cousin.
- He has left a wife and three children at home, the oldest of whom has tuberculosis. He has come to America so he can earn more money for them than he could at home. It is clear he **loves his family** very much: he is near tears when he first talks about them to the Carbones.
- He is anxious not to outstay his welcome with the Carbones: almost his first words are *"I want to tell you now, Eddie - when you say we go, we go."* He is extremely **polite**.
- He always speaks **simply** and **clearly**; which indicates his straightforward, uncomplicated character.
- He is very **strong**. Eddie's friend Mike describes him as a regular bull.
- He feels a **sense of responsibility** for Rodolfo: when Eddie is upset that Catherine and Rodolfo were out late, he warns his brother *"You come home early now."*
- However, he is also **protective** of Rodolfo. After Eddie has punched Rodolfo while 'teaching' him to box, he shows how he can lift a chair above his head with one hand. The *stage directions* tell us the chair is raised like a weapon over Eddie's head. He is warning Eddie that he will defend Rodolfo if necessary.
- He has a clear **sense of justice**. He sees things as right or wrong. When he is arrested, he spits in Eddie's face and accuses Eddie in front of the neighbours - *"That one! He killed my children!"*
- His sense of **honour** is such that if the law can't right a wrong, he will take the law into his own hands. He comes to see Eddie at the end to do what he sees as his **duty** - even when Alfieri had warned him that only God makes justice. (It is interesting that he breaks his word to Alfieri - he kills Eddie despite having promised he would not.)
- Do you think that Marco would have killed Eddie if Eddie has not got out a knife? What do you think is Marco's reaction to Eddie's death?

### Rodolfo

- He is the younger brother of Marco.
- He has got platinum hair and so makes an immediate impression. He has striking good looks - Beatrice and Catherine are obviously attracted to him. His unusual looks may be a signal to us that he is 'different' from the average Italian immigrant. (We later find that he has a different, more sensitive way of trying to solve disputes from Eddie and Marco.)
- He has a good **sense of humour**, so he is popular. He is unvaryingly polite, even when Eddie is rude.
- Unlike Marco, he wants to **stay in America** and own a motorbike. He loves America and wants to find out as much about New York as possible - he is keen to see Broadway. Eddie is concerned because he buys 'American' items like a new jacket and records, rather than send money to Marco's family.
- He can sing, cook and sew: he is very **talented**. It upsets him that Eddie seems to dislike him so much - he cannot understand why his 'feminine' skills are a problem for the 'manly' Eddie.

- His language is lively and imaginative, which shows his intelligence. For example, later in the play, he uses the *image* of Catherine as a bird in a cage.
- Catherine **falls in love** with him almost immediately, and he with her. Even though Eddie tries to suggest that Rodolfo only wants to marry Catherine in order to become a US citizen, it is clear his love is strong and genuine: *"You think I would carry on my back the rest of my life a woman I didn't love just to be an American?"* He speaks very passionately.
- He does not see things in such black and white terms as Marco - he attempts to mediate between Marco and Eddie and is **sensitive** to both points of view. We realise that, in the end, he is more **responsible** than Marco.
- He argues with Marco to promise not to harm Eddie, so that Marco can be granted bail and attend the wedding.
- He apologises to Eddie before the wedding and tries to kiss his hand, in an attempt to calm the situation.
- He tries to prevent Marco and Eddie fighting - *"No, Marco, please! Eddie, please, he has children!"*

### Alfieri

- He is a **lawyer**, born in Italy, who has been working in Brooklyn for 25 years. He is part of the same immigrant Italian community as Eddie.
  - He acts as a **commentator** on the action: he sets the scene and introduces the characters. He is telling us the story of the play in *flashback*: right from the start we know that it is going to run a bloody course. Do you feel that he needs to tell us about what he has seen?
  - He is **compassionate**. He tries to save Eddie and, later, Marco, from the fatal course that they have set out on.
  - When Eddie first goes to see him, Alfieri warns, "there is too much love for the daughter, there is too much love for the niece. Do you understand what I'm saying to you?"
  - When Eddie visits him the second time to try to prevent Catherine and Rodolfo's wedding, Alfieri's warning is more explicit: "You won't have a friend in the world, Eddie!"
  - He tells Marco, "Only God makes justice", trying to prevent Marco from taking the law into his own hands.
  - However, really he is **powerless to change** what he knows is inevitable. Even though he can explain the law to Eddie and Marco, he knows deep down that they will do what their code of honour requires. He is like the *chorus* in a Greek tragedy, commenting on the action and explaining it to the audience, but unable to alter it.
- **The Carbone family** - Eddie, his wife Beatrice and her orphaned niece Catherine - are poor but content. They live in Brooklyn, where Eddie works at the shipyards.
  - **When Beatrice's Italian cousins, illegal immigrants, arrive to stay, the Carbone family's life changes forever. Their loves and their loyalties are tested - and *tragedy* results.**

## **PLOT SUMMARY BY ACT**

### **Act 1 Scene 1**

- The play opens with the lawyer Alfieri, who sets the scene. He talks about justice and how, sometimes, justice is dealt with outside the law. He says he has a timeless story to tell - one that ran a "*bloody course*" he was powerless to prevent - and introduces its hero, Eddie Carbone.
- One day Eddie arrives home from the dockyard where he works with some news. He announces that Beatrice's two cousins from Italy have reached New York and they will arrive at the family's home at 10 o'clock that night. It is obvious that the family has often discussed the visit before - Beatrice is anxious that she hasn't completed all the preparations in the house she had intended to welcome them, and Eddie reminds Beatrice not to be so kind to the cousins that he will be turned out of his own bed for them. Yet he then claims it is an honour for him to be able to help them.

### **Act 1 Scene 2**

- Catherine also has some news: she tells Eddie that she has been picked out of all the girls in her typing class to be offered a well-paid job at a big plumbing company. She is excited at the prospect, but Eddie is worried: he doesn't want her mixing with strangers, wants her to finish her education and is concerned for her safety. Beatrice takes Catherine's side, however, so in the end Eddie relents and allows Catherine to take the job.
- Because the cousins are illegal immigrants, Eddie reminds Beatrice and Catherine not to mention them outside the house. To reinforce the danger, Eddie tells the story of Vinny Bolzano, who let on to the Immigration authorities that his family were hiding an uncle - and the bloody consequences.

### **Act 1 Scene 3**

- The cousins, Marco and Rodolfo, arrive and are warmly welcomed. The quiet, polite Marco reassures Eddie that they will not outstay their welcome and talks about his family left behind in Sicily, desperate for the cash that he will be able to send them once he starts work. He hopes to go home in about six years. The cheerful Rodolfo describes what it is like living in a poor peasant village: unlike his brother, he wants to stay in America. Rodolfo shows off his voice by singing 'Paper Doll', to Catherine's delight. Eddie puts a stop to the music because he doesn't want suspicions raised in the neighbourhood, but we also sense Eddie's dislike of Rodolfo - his face is "*puffed with trouble*."

### **Act 1 Scene 4**

- A few weeks later, Eddie and Beatrice sit waiting for Catherine and Rodolfo to come home from the cinema. It is clear that Rodolfo and Catherine have fallen in love. Eddie's hostility towards Rodolfo is now more open and he is anxious - Beatrice jokes that he must be jealous of Rodolfo. She admires Rodolfo and hopes that he and Catherine will marry, but Eddie is appalled by this idea. This conversation leads Beatrice to ask Eddie about the state of their own marriage: they have not made love for months. Eddie refuses to discuss it.
- When Catherine and Rodolfo finally return, Eddie asks to speak to Catherine alone. He repeats, wistfully, that she has grown up without his realising it. When she admits to liking Rodolfo, Eddie tells her that Rodolfo is only using her and that he just wants to marry an American to gain US

citizenship. Catherine is very upset. She admits privately to Beatrice that she loves Rodolfo and wants to marry him, but that she doesn't want to hurt Eddie. Beatrice advises her to be more independent and grown up, and less intimate with Eddie in the house.

### **Act 1 Scene 5**

- Eddie goes to see Alfieri, wanting the law to step in to stop Catherine marrying Rodolfo. He claims that Rodolfo is only doing it to gain a US passport, and that Rodolfo is homosexual. Eddie is amazed when Alfieri explains that no law can prevent the marriage. Alfieri hints that perhaps Eddie loves Catherine too much (over and beyond the caring, uncle-niece love which could be expected), to which Eddie reacts angrily.
- There is *tension* in the air when we next see Eddie, Beatrice, Catherine, Marco and Rodolfo at home together. Eddie makes barbed comments, implying that Rodolfo is too friendly with Catherine and too casual with his money. He pretends to admire the fact that Rodolfo can cook, sew and sing, before adding that it is wrong for someone with those skills to work at the docks. He offers to treat Rodolfo and Marco to a night watching a prize-fight and teaches Rodolfo to box. This is clearly just an excuse to punch Rodolfo, but Rodolfo takes it good-humouredly. Catherine shows that she is more interested in Rodolfo's safety than Eddie's. Marco shows off his own strength to Eddie by lifting a chair by its leg with one hand - a feat that Eddie cannot match.

### **Act 2 Scene 1**

- It is nearly Christmas. Catherine and Rodolfo are alone in the apartment for the first time. Catherine is sombre. She asks Rodolfo if they could live in Italy when they are married, but he claims it would be ridiculous to go back to such poverty. He does reassure her that he is not going to marry her just to gain US citizenship, however. She says that she doesn't want to hurt Eddie. When he has comforted her, they go into the bedroom. Eddie returns, drunk, and is aghast to see Rodolfo follow Catherine out of the bedroom. He tells Rodolfo to leave immediately; Catherine says that she will go too, but Eddie grabs her and kisses her. When Rodolfo protests, saying Catherine is going to be his wife, Eddie kisses him too. The men fight, "*like animals*".
- Four days later, Eddie returns to Alfieri and tells him what happened. Marco has not been told of the fight. Alfieri reiterates that there is nothing Eddie or the law can do to prevent the wedding. He advises Eddie to let the couple marry, warning him that there could be awful consequences if he didn't. Yet Eddie ignores Alfieri's words and telephones the Immigration Bureau, anonymously, to betray the cousins. When Eddie returns home, he finds that Marco and Rodolfo have moved upstairs to a neighbour's apartment. There is a tense conversation with Beatrice - she is very angry with him. Beatrice tells Eddie that Catherine and Rodolfo are going to get married next week, ironically because Catherine is afraid that the authorities will catch up with the brothers. She tries to get Eddie - who has tears in his eyes - to agree to come to the wedding and, when Catherine comes in, Beatrice encourages Catherine to ask Eddie herself. Catherine refuses to listen to Eddie's suggestion that it is not too late for her to meet other boys - his last-ditch attempt to prevent the wedding.

### **Act 2 Scene 2**



- When Eddie discovers that Marco and Rodolfo are lodged with two other illegal immigrants upstairs, he becomes concerned and warns that they will be less safe from the authorities there. He is obviously regretting the call he made to the Immigration Bureau, but it is too late - two officers arrive. It is clear that Beatrice and Catherine immediately suspect that Eddie was the informer. As the officers lead Marco, Rodolfo and the two other immigrants away, Catherine pleads with the men to spare Rodolfo and Marco spits in Eddie's face. Eddie shouts out that he'll kill Marco; Marco retorts that Eddie has stolen food from his children. Eddie protests that he is innocent, but all the neighbours turn away from him. The honour of both Eddie and Marco is now at stake. We next see Marco and Rodolfo and Catherine with Alfieri's in the reception room of the prison: Alfieri needs a promise from Marco that he will not kill Eddie as a condition of bail. Marco is reluctant, feeling that Eddie should be punished, but agrees.

### Act 2 Scene 3

- It is the day of the wedding. Beatrice gets dressed in her best clothes, but Eddie tells her that if she goes, he won't let her back into the house. Catherine is angry, calling Eddie a rat. When Rodolfo arrives to take Catherine to the church, he says that Marco is at the church, praying. Eddie's fury rises: he wants to get even with Marco, for ruining his good name in the neighbourhood. Beatrice tries to calm him, telling him that the reason he is angry is because he is about to lose Catherine for ever - but this truth fires Eddie up even more. Marco arrives, calling Eddie's name. Eddie goes to meet him in the street and demands a public apology. Instead, Marco calls him an "*animal*". Eddie draws a knife but Marco is able to grip Eddie's wrist and turn the knife on Eddie himself. Eddie dies in Beatrice's arms. Alfieri closes the play, commenting on how useless Eddie's death was, and on how much he admired him for allowing himself to be "*wholly known*."

## DRAMATIC EFFECT SUMMARY

Each of the following aspects of the play contribute importantly to the build-up of dramatic tension as we wait to see how the *tragedy* will play out.

### The Character of Eddie

The **drama revolves around Eddie**. He is the focal point. Everything rests on Eddie's reaction to events. At first this is comparatively minor: will he or won't he allow Catherine to take the job at the plumbing company? Yet soon it becomes crucial: will he or won't he understand that he cannot keep Catherine to himself - that he must allow her to live her own life?

Eddie is the centre round which all the conflict in the play revolves.

- **Verbal conflict** with all the other characters at some point or another. He often deliberately starts arguments - for instance, he questions the virtue of the wives of Italian immigrants: "*I betcha there's plenty of surprises sometimes when those guys get back there, heh?*" Even his jokes are barbed and bitter.
- **Conflict within himself** as he grapples with his love of Catherine.
- **Physical conflict** with Rodolfo and, ultimately, Marco.

This creates a lot of tension, with each scene of conflict becoming more intense than the one that preceded it. The tense atmosphere during the boxing at the end of Act 1 leads on to the shock near the start of Act 2 when an enraged Eddie kisses both Catherine and Rodolfo and starts a fight - which in turn prepares us for the final scene.

### Tone and Timing

There are numerous changes in **tone**. Again, this is often dependent on Eddie. If he is in a good mood, such as immediately the cousins arrive and the *stage directions* tell us he is "*laughing*", the tone is light-hearted; if he is in a bad mood, such as later on that night when "*his face puffed with trouble*", there is tension. Can you think of any other changes in the tone in the play?

**Timing** is crucial to the action of the play. For example, Eddie calls the Immigration Bureau after his meeting with Alfieri on the very day that Catherine says that she is going to marry Rodolfo soon because she is scared of him getting caught by Immigration; simultaneously Marco and Rodolfo move out of the apartment, and thereby cause other immigrants - relatives of the Liparis who have nothing to do with Eddie - to be picked up too. From then on, the pace increases quickly to the end.

These examples of unlucky timing give rise to **dramatic irony** (where the audience have a better idea of what is going to happen than the characters do themselves). Another example is when the Immigration Officers appear outside the Carbones' apartment just as Catherine is arguing with Eddie over where Marco and Rodolfo if Eddie throws them out of the building. We know their argument is pointless because the officers are about to pounce. The effect of dramatic irony is to involve us in the action, to make us feel implicated, almost as if we are ourselves characters in the play.

### The Ending

The **ending** is poignant. A private *tragedy* ends up being acted out in public. All the main characters and other people are on the street outside the apartment to see Eddie killed by Marco. Alfieri rounds off the *drama* by reminding us that Eddie's death was useless and that he loved him, but that he mourns him with "*a certain... alarm.*" What does Alfieri mean by this?

- He is thinking that even though he could predict what was going to happen, even he - a lawyer - could do nothing to prevent it.
- Probably he is thinking that Eddie's faults are common ones, and that his story should be a warning to us all to be more self-aware.
- Perhaps another, equally disturbing thought has occurred to him: that when it finally comes, Eddie's destruction feels not only tragic, but in some way right and appropriate: like the old generation making way for the new.

## Key quotations:

### Turning Point (Beginning of Act 2)

- "Eddie: (his arm jerks slightly in shock)...Pack it up. Go ahead. Get your stuff and get outa here."
- "(...as she strives to free herself he kisses her on the mouth...Eddie pins his arms, laughing, and suddenly kisses him.)"
- "Catherine: Eddie! Let go, ya hear me! I'll kill you!..."
- "Eddie: Don't make me do nuttin', Catherine. Watch your step, submarine. By rights they oughta throw you back in the water. But I got pity on you."
- "(A phone booth begins to glow on the opposite side of the stage; a faint lonely blue)"
- "Alfieri: ...You won't have a friend in the world, Eddie! Even those who understand will turn against you..."
- "(The phone booth is glowing in light now)...Eddie: Give me the number of the Immigration Bureau."

### A tense/dramatic scene:

- "*Marco: In my country he would be dead by now...Maybe he wants to apologize to me.*"
- "Eddie: I want my respect. Didn't you ever hear that? From my wife? "
- "Rodolfo: Marco is coming, Eddie. He's praying in the church. You understand?"
- "Beatrice: You want somethin' else, Eddie, and you can never have her!..."
- "Eddie: (*crying out in agony*) That's what you think of me? That I would have such a thoughts?"
- "Marco: Animal! You go on your knees to me!"

### Conflict

- 'Eddie: Listen, you been givin' me the willies the way you walk down the street, I mean it.'
- 'I take the blankets off my bed for him, and he takes and puts his dirty, filthy hands on her like a goddam thief.'
- Wipin' the neighbourhood with my name like a dirty rag.'
- "Beatrice: You want somethin' else, Eddie, and you can never have her!..."
- "Eddie: (*crying out in agony*) That's what you think of me? That I would have such a thoughts?"
- "Marco: Animal! You go on your knees to me!"

### Loyalty

- "Eddie: Just remember, kid, you can quicker get back a million dollars that was stole than a word you gave away"
- "Eddie: Don't make me do nuttin', Catherine. Watch your step, submarine. By rights I oughta throw you back in the water. But I got pity on you." (59)
- "Beatrice: My God, what did you do?' (74)
- "Marco: That one! I accuse that one! . . . That one! He killed my children"
- "(*Eddie tries in vain to convince his 'friends' that he is not in the wrong*)
- "Eddie: Lipari! [*He follows LIPARI up left.*] 'For Christ's sake, I kept them, I give them the blankets off my bed! (LOUIS barely turns, then walks off and exits down right with MIKE)"

Class Essay Plans: These essay plans are typed up versions of your group-work plans. You should also have these in your jotters.

### A View from the Bridge: National 5 Essay Plan

Choose a scene from a play which acts as a turning point in the fate of a character.

By referring to appropriate techniques, show how this scene acts as a turning point and explain what effect it has on the play as a whole.

#### Introduction

- Title
- Author
- Genre (tragedy)
- Summary (no more than 2 sentences)
- Link to the question

*EXAMPLE: "A View from the Bridge" by Arthur Miller is a tragedy set in a Brooklyn slum in 1950's America. The play centres around an Italian immigrant community for whom loyalty is incredibly important. The arrival of two illegal immigrants, Rodolfo and Marco, marks the beginning of the tragic events for the tragic hero, Eddie Carbone, as he cannot control his feelings of jealousy. The beginning of Act 2 marks the turning point of the play as Eddie's irrational behaviour leads him to make an important and fatal decision - calling immigration and betraying his community.*

#### Paragraph One

- Statement:** *Eddie's arrival onto the scene at the beginning of Act 2, marks the turning point of the play. Miller makes clear that Eddie has been drinking and no longer has control over his jealousy.*
- Context:** *On seeing Catherine and Rodolfo emerge from the bedroom, Eddie's anger and violent impulses are obvious:*
- Quotation:** *"Eddie: (his arm jerks slightly in shock)...Pack it up. Go ahead. Get your stuff and get outa here."*
- Analysis:** *Eddie is clearly not in control of this impulse and it betrays his feelings of anger and aggression.*
- Continue the analysis of this paragraph including the following information:**
- On seeing Eddie's physical reaction, the audience feels tense (explain why)
  - The short, blunt sentences leave no room for discussion – what does this show about Eddie's state of mind?
  - Reality of Eddie's feelings - drops all pretence of 'protecting Catherine' and it's clear he's acting in jealousy.
  - **Remember to link back to the question at the end of the paragraph.**

#### Paragraph Two:

- Statement:** *Eddie's aggressive and violent impulses continue to grow in this scene and his behaviour becomes more irrational and out of control.*
- Context:** Introduce your quotation
- Quotation:** Either quote the stage directions or simply describe how Eddie kisses both Catherine and Rodolfo – you don't have to quote stage directions.
- Analysis:**
- He is trying to show his dominance and masculinity to Catherine and he is trying to prove that Rodolfo is "a weird" → say what this shows about his state of mind.

- Say that Catherine's reaction demonstrates that he is completely lost and that his actions are irrational – she says that she will "kill him".
- Think back to the boxing scene – just like in that scene, Eddie's actions have the opposite effect to that which he intended. → say what this is and how the audience feels on seeing that he doesn't get his way.
- Break down of his family relationships – he loses everything he wants and the audience feel tense as they can sense his desperation. → say what this shows about the theme of loyalty
- Link back to the question

### Paragraph Three:

- Statement:** This should be one or more sentences which link this paragraph to paragraph two. It should mention the question and clearly show what this paragraph is going to be about.
- Context:** Introduce your quotation
- Quotations:** "Eddie: Don't make me do nuttin', Catherine. Watch your step, submarine. By rights they oughta throw you back in the water. But I got pity on you."
- Analysis:**
- Eddie is trying to blame Catherine for his irrational behaviour – this is a threat and shows that Eddie is trying to regain control → say how the audience feels about this.
  - Reminds Rodolfo of his illegal status → say why this is surprising coming from Eddie and what Miller is trying to show that Eddie might do.
  - Eddie is demonstrating his power over the couple → say what the audience thinks about this.
  - "By rights" – say why this is ironic (think American Law vs Italian Code and what Eddie used to be like)
  - Link back to the question – how is this a difference in Eddie's character?

### Paragraph Four

- Statement:** This should be one or more sentences which link this paragraph to paragraph three. It should mention the question and clearly show what this paragraph is going to be about.
- Context:** Introduce your quotation
- Quotations:** "(A phone booth begins to glow on the opposite side of the stage; a faint lonely blue)"  
"Alfieri: ...You won't have a friend in the world, Eddie! Even those who understand will turn against you..."
- Analysis:**
- Starts glowing = represents the start of the idea to call immigration in Eddie's mind
  - Light gets stronger = Eddie has definitely made up his mind to call immigration. Alfieri tries to stop him by reminding him of the consequences but light keeps getting stronger
  - Audience learns he is determined – driven by his feelings for Catherine (theme of unnatural love)
  - Forgets about loyalty and honour → say why this is significant
  - Tension between American law and Italian Code → say what this tension helps the audience understand about this theme.
  - Link back to the question – how has this scene determined the fate of Eddie Carbone?

## Essay Plan: A View from the Bridge

### QUESTION

Choose from a play a scene in which tension builds to a climax.

Explain how the dramatist creates and develops this tension, and discuss the extent to which the scene has thematic as well as dramatic significance.

### Introduction:

*EXAMPLE: "A View from the Bridge" by Arthur Miller is a tragedy set in 1950's Red Hook, New York. The play centres on an Italian immigrant community for whom loyalty is very important. The tragic hero, Eddie Carbone, feels unnatural love for his niece, Catherine, and his resulting jealousy leads him to break loyalty and ultimately leads to his death. In the final scene, Miller creates tension surrounding the fate of Eddie and it builds until the eventual climax of his death. This scene also reveals the themes of loyalty and justice.*

### Paragraph One: EXAMPLE

*In the previous scene, the prison scene, the feeling of tension is already set up when Marco's desire for revenge on Eddie is made clear. He outlines what his idea of justice is, according to the Italian code:*

***"Marco: In my country he would be dead by now...Maybe he wants to apologize to me."***

*It is clear to the audience that Eddie will not apologise to Marco; he is in total denial about what he has done and his only concern is to regain "his name". Before betraying the cousins, Eddie was an honourable character, and now he is desperate to get this honour back. This increases the sense of tension for the audience, as at the end of Act One, Marco proved himself to be stronger and more powerful than Eddie. Therefore, the audience knows that if Eddie does not come to his senses and apologise to Marco for his betrayal, Marco will triumph in his desire for justice. Miller makes sure that the audience is left feeling fearful about Eddie's fate, as it is clear that Eddie will not be able to admit responsibility as he is not ready to lose his "name".*

### Paragraph Two:

*This feeling of tension is increased further in the opening of the final scene. Eddie is shown to be almost traumatised by the events as he is shown alone on the stage rocking backwards and forwards in "surges" in the rocker. Miller fully reveals the extent of Eddie's denial and irrational mind when he says to Beatrice: Evidence:*

- ***"Eddie: I want my respect. Didn't you ever hear that? From my wife?"***
  - How does this increase the tension? Think about the following to help you:
    - Who is the only person who has stuck by Eddie?
    - Does Eddie deserve respect from the community?
    - What does it help the audience understand about Eddie and his state of mind?
    - How does this make the audience feel tense or worried about what Eddie is capable of?

### Paragraph Three:

*The tension mounts further when Rodolfo arrives to warn Eddie about Marco's intentions of exacting revenge and seeking his own justice:*

**Evidence:**

- ***"Rodolfo: Marco is coming, Eddie. He's praying in the church. You understand?"***
  - Explain what this means and what the audience understands Marco is going to do. Explain how it links in with previous scene in the jail.
  - Say how this makes the audience feel – who do we know will win between Marco and Eddie and how do we know this?
  - Say that Eddie cannot accept that he is in danger because he is so desperate to regain his honour. Say what this shows about his state of mind.

*Miller fully reveals Eddie's confusion and irrational mind when Beatrice reveals the real reasons behind his behaviour:*

***"Beatrice: You want somethin' else, Eddie, and you can never have her!..."***

**“Eddie: (*crying out in agony*) That’s what you think of me? That I would have such a thoughts?”**

- Think - why is this important? What are the implications?
- Think about Eddie's reaction to this accusation – how does it show us that he was in denial about his true motivations?
  - How does it engage the audience?
  - What do we feel for Eddie? Why do we feel this?
  - How does it make the scene tenser?
  - Say what theme it reveals and how it helps the audience to understand that theme.

#### **Paragraph Four:**

*The scene reaches a dramatic climax when Marco arrives to confront Eddie in front of the whole neighbourhood.*

#### **Evidence:**

- **“Marco: Animal! You go on your knees to me!”**
  - Say why Marco is so angry and what he is seeking
  - Say why Eddie cannot back down – think about his state of mind
  - Say how Eddie eventually dies with the knife in his own hands
  - Say what this symbolises and why this is such a dramatic climax to the scene
  - Say how the audience is left feeling for Eddie
  - Say what themes (justice and loyalty) this scene helps you to understand and how it helps you to understand them.

#### **Conclusion**

Summarise the reasons why this scene was so tense and how it left the audience feeling.

Summarise why the climax is so dramatic and how the audience is left feeling for Eddie

Say what themes this scene helped you to understand.



## Critical Essay Plans – A View from the Bridge

### Question:

Choose a play which deals with conflict within a family or a group of people.

Describe the conflict and explain what effects the conflict has on the characters and the events of the play.

### Introduction:

- Author and title
- Summary
- Eddie's inner conflict over his growing incestuous feelings for his niece Catherine cause a wider conflict within his family.

### Paragraph 1

#### Statement

- From the beginning of the play Eddie is dealing with an inner turmoil caused by the ambiguity of his feelings for Catherine.
  - Set the scene of seeming domestic harmony
  - Family scene between Catherine, Beatrice and Eddie
  - Eddie returning from work

#### Quote and Analysis

- Miller uses Eddie's character to show that the apparent domestic harmony might not be all that it seems. Eddie's reaction and behaviour towards Catherine act as subtle clues to his growing feelings for her.

**'Listen, you been givin' me the willies the way you walk down the street, I mean it.'**

- Eddie's reaction is stronger than the reaction of a protective father figure
- Because of the way he feels about her he presumes everyone else can see it too
- Miller is building tension by creating uncertainty around the relationship between Catherine and Eddie and hints at the action to follow
- At the beginning of the play Eddie has some control over his inner conflict. As the play progresses he loses control and this causes a more visible conflict within the family.

### Paragraph 2

#### Statement

- Eddie's internal conflict starts to surface when the cousins arrive. This acts as a catalyst, creating further conflict in the wider family.
  - Catherine and Rodolfo's developing relationship
  - Eddie's reaction to it – 1<sup>st</sup> visit to Alfieri to try and stop the relationship before it starts
  - Eddie's outward displays of jealousy towards Rodolfo
  - Eddie's attempts to emasculate Rodolfo

#### Quote and Analysis

**'I take the blankets off my bed for him, and he takes and puts his dirty, filthy hands on her like a goddam thief.'**

- Eddie thinks he owns Catherine. He treats her like a possession
- Eddie is causing conflict between himself, Beatrice, Catherine, Marco and Rodolfo by his actions and reactions
- Examples of this:

- Catherine's growing independence
  - Marco and Rodolfo's awareness of Eddie's ever strange behaviour
  - Beatrice and Eddie's relationship disintegrating
- Miller shows how all the characters in the play are becoming wary of Eddie and his behaviour. He jealous and possessive love is causing conflict between all the characters. However, he is still blind to the conflict believing his reaction is valid.

### Paragraph 3

#### Statement

- As the play progresses the conflict within the family grows and deepens and ultimately causes the tragic ending of the play
- Eddie takes the decision to phone immigration and report the cousins
  - This action will cause conflict within the family and the community
  - Ultimately end in Eddie's death as the conflict becomes physical

#### Quote and Analysis

**'Wipin' the neighbourhood with my name like a dirty rag.'**

- Eddie's conflict with Rodolfo and Marco
- Eddie's metaphorical death within the community – name and reputation. His conflict with his beliefs.
- Eddie's literal death
- The conflict within the family
- Eddie's inner conflict has lead to a conflict within the family and the community that has resulted in his death

### Overall Conclusion

- Sum up all the points you have made
- LINK back to the question (both parts)
  - o Inner conflict leading to conflict within the family
  - o Eddie's actions are directly responsible for the conflict in the play
- Personal opinion

## **National 5 Critical Essay Plans – A View from the Bridge**

### **Question:**

**How is the theme of loyalty established and developed in Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge".**

### **Introduction**

- Author and title
- Brief summary
- The theme of loyalty is established in the opening scenes of the play and is developed over the course of the drama through the action and characterisation.

### **Paragraph 1**

#### **Statement**

- Early on in Act 1 the theme of loyalty to family and community is established. Eddie appears to value these qualities very highly and tells Catherine the story of Vinny Bolzano in order to warn her of the consequences of not being loyal.
  - Briefly outline the story
  - Say how the characters react to the story.

#### **Quote and Analysis**

Eddie tries to really emphasise how important it is to be loyal to family and community and not to "snitch".

**"Just remember, kid, you can quicker get back a million dollars that was stole than a word you gave away"**

- He emphasises just how difficult it would be to be forgiven.
- His warning shows that he would never consider betraying family – he has to warn others but Eddie is very aware of what the consequences would be.
- This makes it clear just how highly Eddie and the community value loyalty. At this point Eddie shows that he is full of integrity.

### **Paragraph 2**

#### **Statement**

At the beginning of Act 2 the theme of loyalty reaches crisis point as it becomes clear that Eddie's loyalty to his own feelings for Catherine is greater than any loyalty he may have for his community.

- Eddie's desperation to end Catherine and Rodolfo's relationship
- Eddie arrives home drunk, sees Catherine and Rodolfo leaving the bedroom and is filled with rage.
- His actions show he is forgetting about his loyalty to family and community.

#### **Quotation and Analysis**

**"Don't make me do nuffin', Catherine. Watch your step, submarine. By rights I oughta throw you back in the water. But I got pity on you." (59)**

- It is clear Eddie is trying to make Catherine feel responsible by saying 'Don't make me' – he is warning her.

- Makes the audience wonder what Eddie is planning to do. Indicates he is no longer loyal to family.
- Clear that he is contemplating drastic action – if he breaks loyalty audience knows there will be serious consequences.
- Say what Miller has shown about the theme of loyalty.

### **Paragraph 3+4**

#### **Statement**

At the end of Act 2 the theme of loyalty reaches climax as Eddie's obsession with his niece has finally led him to break the code of the community (which he had a strong belief in) and inform the immigration bureau that Beatrice's cousins are in America illegally.

- Disastrous consequences

#### **Quotation and Analysis**

##### **“My God, what did you do?” (74)**

- Beatrice's exclamation ‘My God’ conveys...
- Shows how important Beatrice and Catherine still consider loyalty to be. They can't believe what has happened.
- How important loyalty is considered – how significant it is that Eddie betrayed family.

##### **“Marco: That one! I accuse that one! . . . That one! He killed my children”**

- Has ruined the lives of his cousins. Has betrayed his family – the consequences will be felt by more than a few.
- Betrayal considered as bad as killing – by breaking his loyalty to family, Marco will no longer be able to provide for his family.
- All of the community feel the same horror – even Beatrice, Eddie's wife can't believe what he has done.

The consequences of his betrayal – “**(Eddie tries in vain to convince his ‘friends’ that he is not in the wrong) “Eddie: Lipari!’ [He follows LIPARI up left.] ‘For Christ’s sake, I kept them, I give them the blankets off my bed! LOUIS barely turns, then walks off and exits down right with MIKE”**

- denied by friends and family. He will not be forgiven for his lack of commitment to the community and to family.

#### **Conclusion**

- Sum up points made
- At the end of Act 2 the theme of loyalty to a code/community is brought to resolution as Eddie's breaking of the code and betraying Marco and Rodolfo leads to his death.
- Discuss how well the theme was developed and what Miller has helped the audience to understand.