

# Lesson 4: Drama

## What do the characters learn?

### Aim

To explore how the characters learn and change over the course of the play.

### Objectives

- To understand the inter-connection between relationships and views.
- To understand that personal views may change in relation to other people and events.
- To demonstrate how the characters' relationships and views change over the course of the play.

### National Curriculum Links

DRAMA: KS4 AO1, AO2, AO3

CITIZENSHIP: KS4 AO2, AO3

### Materials

Play Synopsis (see Preparatory Lessons)

Possibly white board and pen

### Activities

1. Divide the class into groups of four. Ask them to tell the story of *Nobody Lives Forever* as succinctly and accurately as possible in one of the following ways (you may like to refer to the play synopsis in Preparatory Lessons to help you):

- Freeze Frames (max. 7)
- Freeze Frames with captions (max. 5)
- Speed improvisation (max. time 1 min)

Share and discuss the differences between the versions.

2. Ask the students to create a series of four freeze-frames of the relationships between four characters at the following moments of the play. The aim is to capture how the relationships change:

- At the start of the play
- When Riv introduces Cassie to his family
- When Tracey reveals that she has Huntington's Disease
- At the end of the play

Note: It may also be interesting to include one of the family some years after the end of the play, including Riv and Cassie's child, showing how Tracey's Huntington's progresses and whether or not Phee has inherited the disease.

### 3. Extension Exercise

You could ask the groups to “morph” their freeze-frames into each other i.e. show the transition from one freeze-frame to the next as a slow merging process. Can they do this in such a way as to teach us something further about the changing relationships? (they may also need to change character).

4. Watch the groups and use this as a springboard to discuss how the characters change over the course of the play. Why? What do they each learn? If you intend to continue to the next exercise it may be useful to note down the ideas that are suggested for each of the characters.

### 5. Extension Exercise

Divide the class into pairs. Each pair can choose which of the four characters from the play they want to work on (Tracey, Riv, Phee or Cassie).

In their pairs they must work on the following role-plays/invisible scenes from the story. The focus is to demonstrate how the characters change over the play, and thus one scene is near the start and one at the end of the play:

#### **Riv**

1. Riv and a friend

**When:** At the beginning of the play

**Things to include:** Riv's attitude towards his mother and sister

2. Riv and a friend

**When:** Towards the end of the play; Riv knows he will develop Huntington's Disease, and is trying to persuade Cassie to donate their Huntington's embryos for research

**Things to include:** Riv's feelings about the future, his attitude towards his mother and sister and his relationship with Cassie

## **Tracey**

### 1. Tracey with Melly

**When:** Near the beginning of the play

**Things to include:** Tracey's attitude towards her work as a DJ and her relationship with her children

### 2. Tracey with Melly

**When:** At the end of the play

**What to include:** Tracey's feelings about Riv's death, the development of her disease (and its effect on Phee and Cassie as well as herself) and the future

## **Phee**

### 1. Phee with Dr Khaled

**When:** Near the beginning of the play, at the lecture where Phee meets Doctor Khaled

**What to include:** Phee's developing interest in science, especially stem-cells, and her attitude towards her family

### 2. Phee with Dr Khaled

**When:** At the end of the play

**What to include:** Phee's interest in how stem cell research might help Huntington's patients, and her attitude towards Cassie's decision about the embryos (i.e. does Cassie finally decide to donate the embryos for research or not?)

## **Cassie**

### 1. Cassie with her vicar

**When:** Near the beginning of the play, when Cassie has recently met Riv.

**What to include:** Cassie's feelings towards Riv, and how she feels about him not being a Christian.

## 2. Cassie with her vicar

**When:** At the end of the play

**What to include:** Cassie's feelings about the future, and her decision whether or not to donate the remaining embryos for research into Huntington's Disease.

Allow 10-15 minutes for the pairs to work on their scenes.

Watch some/all of the scenes. Ask students to comment on anything new they have discovered about what the characters learnt. What have they learnt themselves from doing this exercise?