

**Research and analysis of the text for performance.****Identifying the intention of the playwright – *A Nice Cup of Tea* by Jos Biggs****Identifying the ideas, themes and messages within the chosen text**

One of the main ideas throughout it I believe is the importance of communication. From the outset, Marion is mumbling her true feelings and changing what she says when Harold asks for an explanation. I feel as though this shows that the two people aren't able to speak truthfully to the other, maybe with the exception of Harold who seems to say whatever he likes. I feel as though a lot of Marion's anguish is caused by her pent-up anger and tension toward Harold, causing her to snap at times. ①

**Establishing the social background of the text**

With, in my research, very little information on social setting, I personally felt as though the play was set in the late 50's, due to the fact that Marion is clearly a typical housewife, but then the dialogue proved me wrong, with mentions of Brad Pitt, who was definitely not around back then. Instead I have decided to keep the piece as modern as possible, instead alluding to the stereotypical housewife.

**Considering the development of the characters and action throughout the text**

I loved the complete arrogance and total ignorance toward Marion's negativity that Harold has, which is added to by Marion's complete bluntness when it comes to saying how she feels, through the use of her mumbling and then trying to manipulate what she said. When I began to look solely at the actions that the two could be doing on the stage I noted that there was so much that I could do regarding facial expressions between the two; like a patronising smile from Harold when he says "We wouldn't want any accidents now, would we?", or a look of shock and mild outrage when Harold says "you must have been putting on weight, old thing". ③

Marion is a middle aged housewife, married to Harold. She is quite clever and witty, but, due to her husband, often has to control herself. In her relationship she is at her wit's end; she is fed up with constantly being demeaned by Harold, and is seriously considering leaving him. Her way to vent her anger at her husband is to mumble to herself or to snap at him, yelling at the top of her lungs.

Harold is a man in his late 40's, who works for a firm named "Slouch and Drogham". He has recently passed a Health and Safety course at work, landing him the role of a Health and Safety officer. He decides to take this knowledge home with him, making sure there is no Health and Safety risks within his household. His supercilious nature causes him to think very highly of himself, and also to disregard the feelings and sanity of his wife, Marion. ③

**Formulating an explanation of the director's production concept.**

Within this play there is a lot of stress on the relationship between two characters. What sparked this and how long this has been happening, we don't know; but what we are shown is Marion, who is tired of the total lack of respect received from her husband, and the supercilious nature of Harold. I want to show within this play the importance of effective communication within a relationship, and also the strife of a housewife. ①

**Translating the scripted text to facilitate the enactment of the script from ‘page to stage’:**

<p><b>Communicating a concept to convey the intention of the play</b></p>
<p>I want my piece to be quite simple regarding setting, as the majority of the humour is from the dialogue. I want plain white wash lighting over the stage with a table in the centre and some sort of work surface to the stage right. There is the Upstage Right entrance that Marion uses to leave the stage and get her balaclava and ladder, and the upstage left one that Harold uses to enter and Marion uses to get the gumboots and coat. I have kept these as constant as possible in order to give the idea of doorways entering and exiting the room, and to create continuity within the piece. Two A-frame ladders with a plank between them will be a shelf from which Jade will reach up and grab the items, which is convenient as the ladders will allow the audience in any position to see the action on stage, without having their view blocked. <span style="float: right;">②</span></p>
<p><b>Casting of actors</b></p>
<p>Marion: Needs to be a strong personality, can be sweet but needs to be snide and sarcastic at times. Harold: Needs to be pompous, arrogant, and completely oblivious of his wife's negativity. <span style="float: right;">②</span></p>
<p><b>Developing and implementing a rehearsal schedule</b></p>
<p>The actors have two very strict schedules. The only times that they and I are both free simultaneously is Wednesday after school and Thursday lunchtimes. Therefore I have made so that we have a rehearsal at each of those times.</p>
<p><b>Supporting the development of roles and dramatic action</b></p>
<p><b>Harold:</b> Diction, saying each of the words as clearly as possible. Keep the volume high. There's no point doing this if they can't hear you. <b>Jade:</b> Being sure to emphasise her mumbles, and keep them at a volume that people can still hear. To get changed as quickly as possible when off stage. When we were getting on our feet and adding in movement and blocking I would often get up and show them a particular move, or demonstrate to them what I meant verbally by showing them visually.</p>
<p><b>Guiding the production team</b></p>
<p>The sound used within the piece is very simple. There are two sound effects that are to be played on cue; a door slamming and a kettle boiling. The lighting is sorted. The box of light has very crisp edges. I have explained to the techie that it is simply lights up as the curtains open, and lights down on the final line "Yes dear. It could be a little hotter." <span style="float: right;">②</span></p>
<p><b>Fostering a positive and co-operative working environment to enable the production to be realised.</b></p>
<p>I had already established a good relationship with my cast before this assessment, and so we were able to skip the initial "getting to know each other" phase. Doing the initial read-through's I was able to go back and suggest ways of delivering lines and they would take it in hand. There felt as though there was mutual respect between myself and the cast, and that has helped.</p>