

Act	Plot – ‘Blood Brothers’ by Willy Russell	Character	Context	
1	<p><b>Overture</b> - The Narrator introduces the story and asks us to judge Mrs Johnstone, in a scene that is reminiscent of a Shakespearian prologue.</p> <p><b>Marilyn Monroe</b> - Mrs Johnstone sings the song of Marilyn Monroe. We see her impoverished lifestyle and learn she is expecting twins. The Narrator appears as a milkman and a gynaecologist..</p> <p><b>My Child</b> - Now in Mrs Lyons’ house, the women compare lives. Mrs Johnstone reveals she is expecting twins and Mrs Lyons convinces her to give one to her.</p> <p><b>Easy Terms</b> - Mrs Johnstone gives birth and comes home to find her things being taken away, and Mrs Lyons takes Edward.</p> <p><b>Shoes Upon the Table (Devil’s Got Your Number)</b> - Mrs. Lyons fires Mrs. Johnstone, and tells her that she will never see Edward again because if the twins are ever told what they are, they will die, according to superstition. July the 18th - 7 years forward. Mickey recites ‘I Wish I Was Our Sammy’. Mickey meets Eddie. The two "decide" to be best friends, and discover that they share the same birthday. They prick their fingers and mix the blood. They are now Blood Brothers.</p> <p><b>Kid’s Game</b> - Mickey plays games with Sammy, Linda, and the other children in the area. They pretend to be Cowboys and Indians, and the gun motif appears as they ‘shoot’ each other.</p> <p><b>Gypsies in the Wood/ Shoes Upon the Table (DGYN) Reprise 1</b> - the mothers tell their children not to play together, but they disobey and get in trouble with the police. Mrs Lyons tells Mr Lyons they must leave. Mickey and Eddie say their goodbyes and Mrs Johnstone gives Eddie a locket with a picture of her and Mickey.</p> <p><b>Long Sunday Afternoon/ My Friend</b> - Mickey, sings of his loneliness (Long Sunday Afternoon) and then sings of his very best friend. At the same time, Edward, upset and lonely in his new house, sings of Mickey (My Friend).</p> <p><b>Bright New Day</b> - Mrs. Johnstone is informed that the government housing that they will live in is to be torn down. She will be moved to the country. She is overjoyed, knowing she can start over afresh.</p>	 <p><b>Narrator</b></p>	<p>Takes on multiple roles.</p>	 <p><b>Marilyn Monroe</b> – An icon of glamour and luxury, she was also troubled and died of an overdose after becoming addicted to various drugs.</p>
		<p><b>Mrs Johnstone</b></p>	<p>Mother of the twins, impoverished.</p>	
		<p><b>Mrs Lyons</b></p>	<p>Takes Eddie, privileged.</p>	<p><b>Willy Russell</b> - Willy Russell was born in 1947 in Liverpool, where the play is set. He came from a working class family and became a hairdresser after leaving school at fifteen. In later life he decided to go back to college. It was at college that he started writing plays.</p>
		 <p><b>Mickey</b></p>	<p>Poor twin, frequently downtrodden.</p>	
		 <p><b>Eddie</b></p>	<p>Rich twin, not streetwise Sammy - delinquent brother to Mickey.</p>	
		<p><b>Linda</b></p>	<p>Mickey’s girlfriend and Eddie’s secret love.</p> 	
		<p><b>Mr Lyons</b></p>	<p>Father of Edward.</p>	
2	<p><b>Marilyn Monroe Reprise 1</b> - Mrs Johnstone sings of the new life they are enjoying. She re-introduces Mickey, now 14, Sammy, 16 (who is still a troublemaker), and her other children. Sammy robs a bus conductor at knife point.</p> <p><b>Secrets</b> - in parallel scenes, we move to the classroom and see Mickey and Linda suspended from school. In his private school, Eddie is also suspended because he refuses to remove his locket for the teacher. At home, Mrs. Lyons is furious as she finds out the contents of the locket. Eddie confronts his mother, saying she must have secrets, too, and the Narrator reminds her of what she has hidden.</p> <p><b>That Guy</b> - Mickey and Eddie meet again in the country, not recognising each other at first and singing of how they wish they were the other. They go to see ‘Nymphomaniac Nights’.</p> <p><b>Shoes Upon the Table (DGYN) Reprise 2</b> - A hysterical Mrs Lyons threatens Mrs Johnstone at knife point.</p> <p><b>Summer Sequence</b> - Micky, Eddie and Linda grow up to the age of 18 and we watch different moments in their lives.</p> <p><b>I’m Not Saying a Word</b> - Eddie realises he is falling for Linda, but puts it aside, telling Linda she should be with Mickey. He brings the two together and leaves for school.</p> <p><b>One Day in October</b> - Linda is pregnant. Mickey tells his mother, and she says she will give them her blessing for marriage.</p> <p><b>Take a Letter Miss Jones</b> - Mickey is sacked, along with many others, in a scene that highlights job losses under Margaret Thatcher’s government. He desperately tries to find a job. He meets Eddie again on Christmas break, and Eddie offers him money, which Mickey refuses. Edward leaves; both men are mad at each other.</p> <p><b>The Robbery</b> - two parallel conversations are intermingled, with Eddie proclaiming his love to Linda, who rejects him, and Mickey agreeing to stand guard for Sammy on a robbery. In the robbery, Sammy accidentally shoots and kills the man. He flees, leaving Mickey the accused</p> <p><b>Marilyn Monroe Reprise 2</b> - Mickey is put in jail for seven years and is depressed. He is given pills, which he becomes addicted to.</p> <p><b>Light Romance</b> - Linda, upset and very frustrated, begins an affair with Eddie. Mrs Lyons spitefully goes to Mickey’s work, and informs him of Linda and Edward.</p> <p><b>Madman</b> - Mickey is still delirious from his pills and in a rage because of what he has heard. He takes a loaded gun to the courtroom, where Edward is a councillor (Madman).</p> <p><b>The Council Chamber</b> - Mickey breaks down, accusing Edward of getting everything, even Linda now. Mrs. Johnstone doesn’t know what to do, so she tells him not to kill Eddie because they are brothers. Mickey, even more jealous now, shoots Eddie. The police, in turn, shoot Mickey, fulfilling the superstition.</p> <p><b>Tell Me It’s Not True</b> - The play is shown to be cyclical, as we end up back where we started. The two dead bodies lie there; the Narrator recaps the events. Mrs. Johnstone sings through her tears, asking the sad reality not to be true.</p>	<p><b>Themes</b></p>	<p><b>Techniques and Terminology</b></p>	
		<p>Nature vs. Nurture – we are encouraged to wonder whether it is genetics or their upbringing that has influenced the boys’ lives.</p>	<p><b>Reprise</b> – a song or part of a song that is repeated. Often it is intermingled with a new song. E.g. Marilyn Monroe.</p> <p><b>Motif</b> – A dominant or recurring image or idea in a text e.g. the gun. Juxtaposition – Two opposite ideas are near each other in a piece of writing.</p> <p><b>Foreshadowing</b> – when the author alludes to what is to come in the text.</p>	
		<p>Class – the contrast between the Johnstone and Lyons’ backgrounds dominates much of the play.</p>	<p><b>Parallel</b> – two corresponding things that run side by side, e.g. the school scenes.</p> <p><b>Cyclical</b> – the structure of the play is cyclical as it starts and ends in the same place. Soliloquy – when a character speaks their thoughts aloud, to themselves. It is different to a monologue which is one character speaking, but in front of others (e.g. ‘My Last Duchess’)</p>	
		<p>Superstition – Mrs Lyons manipulates Mrs Johnstone’s superstitious character, creating the central conflict in the play.</p>	<p><b>Antihero</b> – a central character in a story, film, or drama who lacks conventional heroic attributes. Narrator – echoes the function of the Greek Chorus, asks the audience to detach and judge.</p>	
		<p>Motherhood</p>	<p><b>Stage Directions</b> – used prolifically by Russell to describe the movement and actions of characters.</p>	
		<p>Power</p>		
		<p>Judgement</p>		
		<p>Love</p>		
		<p>Destiny/ Fate</p>		