 Jasper Jones close study

Close study act 1 scene 1

(pages 1-3 On a dark stage… I’m already full).

Drama activities for pairs or small groups

1. Read pages 1-3 aloud together two or three times. Do a dramatic reading of this scene in which you emphasise the differences between Jasper and Charlie. Try reading Charlie’s part in different tones, for example excited, flat, fearful.
2. Reread the stage directions at the beginning of Act 1 Scene 1. Make a sketch the stage set.
3. Read pages 1-3. Use the information contained in the stage directions and dialogue to sketch costumes for Charlie and Jasper in this scene.

What is being said:

1. Write down three key points that Charlie makes about Jasper. Include a quote for each point.
2. Write down three key points that Charlie makes about himself. Include a quote for each point.
3. How does Charlie deal with Jasper’s offer of a cigarette? What does this suggest about Charlie’s character at the opening of the play?
4. Describe the way that Charlie moves and behaves.
5. If you were directing the play, how would you ask the actor playing Jasper to move in this scene?
6. What do we learn about Corrigan in this scene?
7. Describe the mood or atmosphere of this scene. Explain your answer with close reference to the text.

How is it being said?

1. Explain how Charlie’s language differs from Jasper’s. (consider vocabulary, syntax, content)
2. What does Charlie’s speech suggest about his personality?
3. What aspects of Jasper’s speech could be considered Aboriginal English?
4. What does Jasper’s speech indicate about his personality?

Close study act 1 scene 4

(pages 14-15 Jeffrey Batman is just an eccentric billionaire… superior to you in this argument).

In this scene Charlie and Jeffrey discuss superheroes. Read the scene aloud in your group and answer the following questions in full sentences.

1. Why does Jeffrey prefer Superman?
2. In what ways might Jeffrey’s preference for Superman be reflected in his own behaviour throughout the play?
3. Why does Charlie prefer Batman?

Explain how each of the following quotes relates to the play as a whole

| Quotes | Relationship to the play as a whole |
| --- | --- |
| Charlie: …He’s just a really determined guy. He’s normal. In him we see ourselves. And that‘s what makes him the est. To be Batman takes a lot of courage. |       |
| Charlie: The more you have to lose, the braver you are for standing up. |       |

Close study act 2 scene 9

(pages 66-67 MRS BUCKTIN: … Your father and I don’t love each other anymore … I love you, my darling. Sorry).

This is another scene where several of the play’s main concerns converge. It is also a scene in which problems in the Bucktin’s marriage, which have been hinted at, are clarified. Answer the following questions in full sentences and use quotes to support your comments.

Read the scene aloud in your pair or group. Experiment with different tones, for example try reading Mrs Bucktin’s role in an angry voice, and again in a sad voice, and once again in a careless voice. Which tone(s) work best? Why? How would Charlie’s voice sound as he interacts with his mother in this scene?

1. Give two reasons why Mrs Bucktin believes her marriage is now loveless.
2. Explain how Mrs Bucktin’s speech about Corrigan on p. 66 juxtaposes the ‘normal’ with the horrific. Use quotes to support your answer.
3. How does her use of alliteration give impact to Mrs Bucktin’s description of Corrigan?
4. What is Mrs Bucktin’s attitude to her husband’s aspirations to write “The great Australian novel”?
5. Does Mrs Bucktin still care about her husband despite her decision to leave Corrigan?
6. What might be the implications for Charlie and his father of Mrs Bucktin’s decision to leave town with another man?
7. How does Charlie react to his mother’s decision to leave her family?
8. Why do you think Mrs Bucktin calls Charlie “a good man” rather than a good ‘boy’ at the end of this scene? In what ways has Charlie behaved in a ‘manly’ or adult way here?