

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

Lesson plan

Resources

- ❖ Copies of *Dr Faustus* texts
- ❖ **Resource A** – Good or evil?
- ❖ Scissors or colouring pencils/highlighters
- ❖ **Resource B** – Film Clip of *Dr Faustus Scene 5 Part 2*
- ❖ **Resource C** – Extract from *Dr Faustus Scene 5 Part 2* with corresponding Bible passages

Learning objectives

- ❖ To consider the presentation of good and evil in the scene
- ❖ To consider the significance of the characters
- ❖ To explore Marlowe's use of biblical allusion
- ❖ To analyse how Marlowe creates fear and tension

Starter activity – considering good and evil

- ❖ Teacher writes the words 'good' and 'evil' on the board, and students brainstorm all examples of these themes in the play so far (also a good way to recap the story so far).
 - Using **Resource A** - Good or evil? students work in pairs to decide which features should be considered good and which evil, either:
 - by cutting and arranging into two piles or on a good-evil continuum
 - or by colouring in using two different colours.
 - Compare ideas with another pair.

Intro – reading and understanding the scene

- ❖ Recap the events of Scene 5 so far (Faustus makes a written pact with the devil) and then read Scene 5 part 2 (line 134 'Ay, of necessity, for here's the scroll/ Wherein thou hast

given thy soul to Lucifer.' to the end of the scene).

- Discuss and sum up the scene to establish understanding.
- Students identify three good features and three evil features in this scene. (Establish that there are glimpses of good/hope e.g. talk of Christ and repentance, but these are quickly dismissed and overtaken by evil.)

Main activity 1 – paired work on characters

- ❖ Allocate the following characters to pairs, and ask students to consider their symbolic significance:
 - Good angel
 - Evil angel
 - she-devil
 - God/Christ
 - Lucifer
 - Pride
 - Covetousness
 - Wrath
 - Envy
 - Gluttony
 - Sloth
 - Lechery.
- Students might find it helpful to consider the following prompt questions (write on board):
 - Is this a good or an evil character? A 'real' or a symbolic character?
 - When and why does this character appear? (What comes before and after?)
 - Does the character speak? What is the significance?
 - How does the character relate to/impact upon Faustus?
 - How does the audience respond to the character?
- Feedback ideas. (Establish that:
 - the different characters vie for Faustus' attention and loyalty, or represent his inner battle between good and evil

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

- evil characters dominate and impress Faustus and receive his attention
- despite his ongoing opportunities to repent and align himself with the good characters, Faustus is too impressed with the trappings of evil
- most of the characters are there to create fear and tension in the audience
- some characters are there for spectacle e.g. the she-devil with fireworks, the visual representation of the two sides of Faustus in the Good Angel and Evil Angel.)

Main activity 2 – class discussion of biblical allusion

- ❖ Watch the film clip [**Resource B**], following along on the handout [**Resource C**].
 - Discuss and make notes: The characters often (ironically) use biblical references which underline the themes of good and evil to the audience. Which Bible references remind the audience of:
 - God's goodness and power?
 - The devil's wickedness?
 - Faustus' wrong choices between good and evil?
 - How and why does Marlowe use biblical allusion in this scene? (reinforce themes, create fear and tension in the audience, characterization, etc.).

Plenary – group work on fear and tension

- ❖ Mind map in groups: How does Marlowe maintain fear and tension in this scene, even after Faustus has signed the deed? (on-going battle between good and evil, missed chances to repent, appearance of Lucifer and personified sins, use of biblical references, Faustus' continuous over-reaching and blindness to consequences, etc).

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

Resources

Resource A – Good or evil?

Which of the following do you think should be considered as good and which evil?

ambition	repentance
wife	Lucifer
God	knowledge
power	whore
pride	prayer
beauty	hell
wrath	determination
magic spells	gluttony
Christ	covetousness
envy	Heaven
sloth	lechery

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

FAUSTUS. Ay, go, accursed spirit, to ugly hell!
'Tis thou hast damn'd distressed Faustus' soul.
Is't not too late?

[enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL.]

EVIL ANGEL. Too late.

GOOD ANGEL. Never too late, if Faustus will repent.

EVIL ANGEL. If thou repent, devils will tear thee in pieces.

1 Peter 5:8 The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour

GOOD ANGEL. Repent, and they shall never raze thy skin.

Job 2:4, 7 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, 'Skin for skin ...' So .. Satan ... smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

[Exeunt ANGELS.]

FAUSTUS. O Christ, my Saviour, my Saviour
Help to save distressed Faustus' soul!

Enter LUCIFER, BELZEBUB, and MEPHISTOPHILIS.

LUCIFER. Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just:
There's none but I have interest in the same.

FAUSTUS. O, what art thou that look'st so terribly?

LUCIFER. I am Lucifer,
And this is my companion-prince in hell.

Isaiah 14:12-15 ¹²How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! ... ¹³For thou hast said in thine heart, ... ¹⁴I will be like the most High. ¹⁵Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

FAUSTUS. O Faustus, they are come to fetch thy soul!

BELZEBUB. We are come to tell thee thou dost injure us.

LUCIFER. Thou call'st of Christ, contrary to thy promise.

BELZEBUB. Thou shouldst not think on God.

LUCIFER. Think of the devil.

BELZEBUB. And his dam too.

FAUSTUS. Nor will Faustus henceforth: pardon him for this,
And Faustus vows never to look to heaven.

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

Intertextuality and the context of reception: *Dr Faustus* – Scene 5 part 2 by Christopher Marlowe

LUCIFER. So shalt thou shew thyself an obedient servant,
And we will highly gratify thee for it.

BELZEBUB. Faustus, we are come from hell in person to shew thee
some pastime: sit down, and thou shalt behold the Seven Deadly
Sins appear to thee in their own proper shapes and likeness.

FAUSTUS. That sight will be as pleasant unto me,
As Paradise was to Adam the first day
Of his creation.

Genesis 2:8-9 ⁸And the LORD God planted a garden ... and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹And ... every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food

LUCIFER. Talk not of Paradise or creation; but mark the show.—
Go, Mephistophilis, and fetch them in.